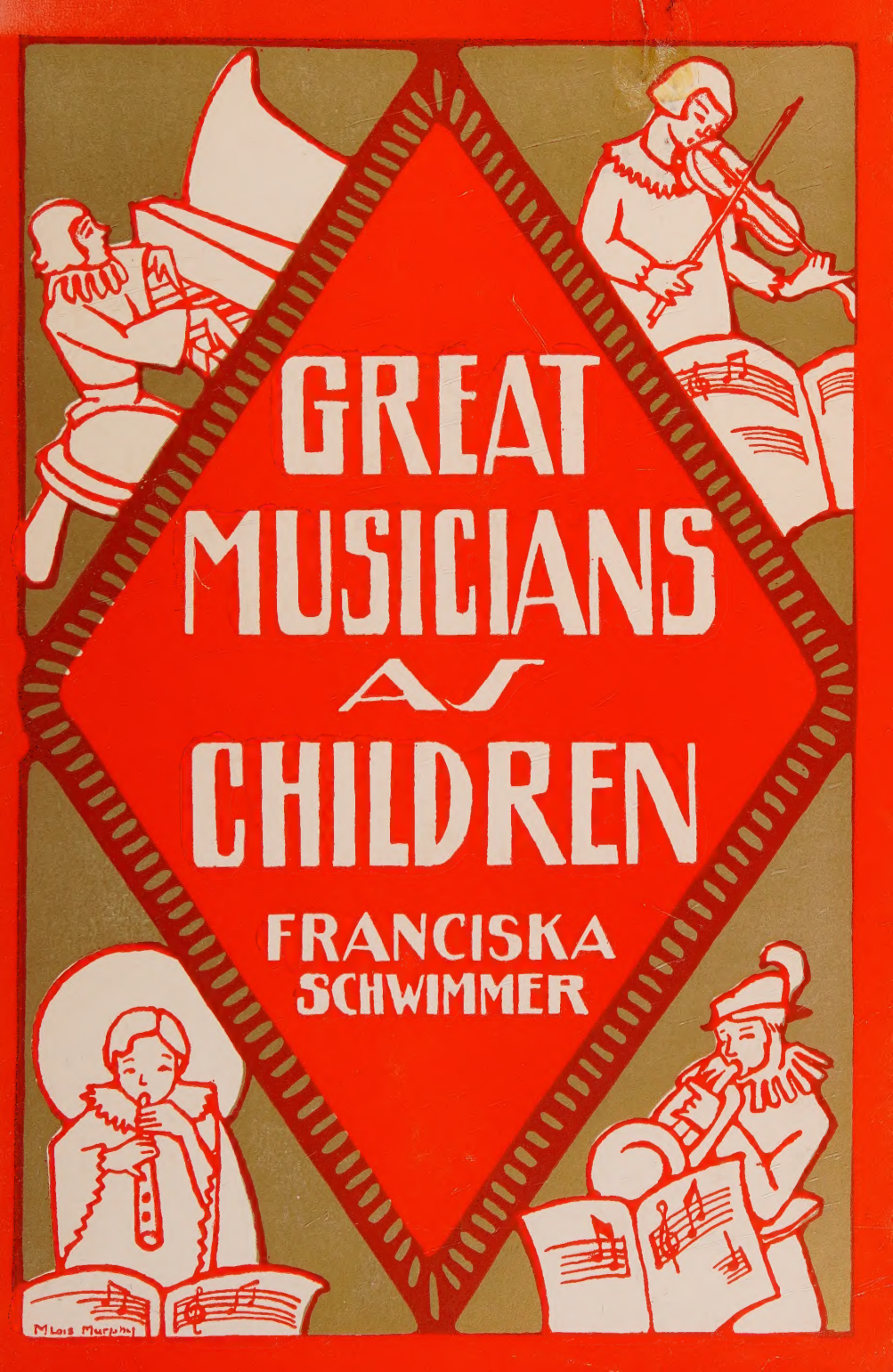
GREAT
MUSICIANS
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GREAT MUSICIANS AS CHILDREN

Here is a book that makes great musicians very friendly and human.

The stories are all true—and all interesting. They tell how Edward McDowell hired his older brother for two pennies to bang the piano while he read a new book instead of practicing; how little Wolfgang Mozart tamed the customs guard with his music; how Walter Damrosch had stage fright over his first appearance as a cymbalist. They tell of musicians of long ago—and musicians of to-day, of their homes and childhood pranks, their surrounding influences and character.

These are outstanding biographical sketches of the childhood of great musicians, written by a musician for older boys and girls.

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Great Musicians as Children

GREAT MUSICIANS AS CHILDREN

BY

Franciska Schwimmer

GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK

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TO THE MEMORY OF

MY PARENTS

Contents

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION Why I Did Not Become a Great Musician	1
II.	MOZART Taming the Customs Guard	20
III.	EDWARD MacDOWELL A Bargain in Practising	28
IV.	FREDERIC CHOPIN A Musical Sleeping Powder	34
V.	FRANZ SCHUBERT A Dance in the Village Inn	45
VI.	GIUSEPPE VERDI How a Box on His Ears Opened the Way to His Career	54
VII.	LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN A Childhood Without Fun	59
VIII.	CLARA SCHUMANN The Coach and the Bus	67
IX.	EDVARD GRIEG Once Too Often	76
X.	FRANZ LISZT A Red Egg for a Recital	84

CHAPTER		PAGE
XI.	JOSEPH HAYDN IMPROVISED INSTRUMENTS	92
XII.	CHARLES GOUNOD OPERA AS AN APPETIZER	99
XIII.	JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH MUSICAL BURGLARY	105
XIV.	A BOUQUET OF STRAUSSES TEN FAMOUS MUSICIANS	111
XV.	FEODOR IVANOVITCH CHALIAPINE IF LIFE WERE AN OPERA	131
XVI.	WALTER DAMROSCH A DEFEATED CYMBALIST	141
XVII.	COUNT GÉZA ZICHY A MEAL OF FLIES	146
XVIII.	RICHARD WAGNER HIS MOST HEROIC DEED	152
XIX.	PETER ILICH TCHAIKOVSKY MUSIC ON THE WINDOWPANE	163
XX.	GEORG FRIEDRICH HANDEL A SURPRISE FOR THE ORCHESTRA	172
XXI.	FELIX WEINGARTNER AN OPERA IN GREEN	180
XXII.	ETHEL SMYTH A PEERESS IN HER OWN RIGHT	186
XXIII.	FELIX MENDELSSOHN FOOLING A DEMIGOD	194

CHAPTER PAGE

XXIV. LEO SLEZAK 207
An Army of Lohengrins

XXV. DR. JENÖ VON HUBAY 214
A Lost Contest

XXVI. WILHELM KIENZL 219
Too Many "Addios"

XXVII. ANTON DVORÁK 223
An Unconvincing Serenade

XXVIII. GEORGE GERSHWIN 231
Soaked in Rain and Admiration

Great Musicians as Children

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Why I Did Not Become a Great Musician

The young piano teacher leaned on the piano and my mother sat with a book in her hand in the easy chair. Outside, in the hall and in the long corridor, was great commotion. And increasing noise. More and more members of the family and the household rushed around. After having searched in vain in all the rooms, they assembled in the corridor.

"Franzi! Franzi? Fraaanzi! Franziii?" they called out in all modulations. My brother dashed up and down the corridor, making a terrific noise calling me. The maid squeaked funnily, my sister called me in her beautiful alto voice, the French governess called "Françoise! Françoise!" The cook added her good Hungarian accent, my young aunts—Father's and Mother's sisters, just visiting—joined the chorus.

This general shouting of my name was the overture to my first piano lesson. All the while I sat happily chuckling and munching a delicious apple in a place so dark that I could not see its

bright red cheek. They rushed by the place of my hiding and I calmly waited for the moment when I would be detected.

At last my brother, remembering where he used occasionally to hide, opened the heavy lid of the huge soiled-linen box and dragged me by the scruff of my neck out of my retreat. With an Indian whoop he signalled his victory, sealed it by snatching from my hand what was left of my apple, and carried me triumphantly to the music room.

For several weeks a similar performance took place before the daily piano lesson—with less excitement because they knew where to find me. But every day they had to drag me out of the soiled-linen box. It was awfully stupid of me not to change the hiding place, but I was hardly more than six years old and not really opposed to the piano lessons. I liked music as well as did any of my very musical family, but the hiding seemed to give the piano lessons a pleasant touch.

Among the memories of my very happy childhood music springs up wherever I turn my mind. In our family the daily twilight hour was devoted to singing and, later, also to playing

instruments and dancing. When dusk fell our parents and we three children assembled in the living room, sat down in a group, and started singing. Hungarian folk songs, sad and gay ones, then folk songs of other nations, melodies from comic operas, and also arias from grand operas we sang in a steady stream until it became quite dark and the lamps were lighted.

In our outdoor life the military music band played a gay rôle. The city where we lived during my first years was famous for its exceptionally good military band, which played several times a week in the beautiful parks of that city.

I can see myself and my brother hanging around the band stand and staring into the mouths of the trumpets. On instigation of my brother, one day we borrowed some lemons from the kitchen and placed ourselves conspicuously in front of one of the trumpeters and bit into the lemons. My brother had read somewhere that doing this would make the trumpeter's mouth water so that it would run into his instrument and we would have some fun.

I never knew what happened to the trumpeter because the bite into the lemon was so unpleas-

ant—the skin bitter and the pulp sour—that I rushed back to mother. The maid had to rinse my mouth, and I was cured once for all from provoking trumpeters.

I remember creating a little sensation when I once ran from the band stand to my mother and excitedly exclaimed: "Mamma, aren't they playing as if they were tipsy?"

My mother used to say this exclamation was a great compliment to Johann Strauss, the Waltz King. The piece that gave me the sensation of tipsy playing was Strauss's "Champagne Song" from the comic opera *Fledermaus*, which in the play is sung by a chorus of slightly tipsy guests at the Prince's party.

In later years my mother once told this story to my piano teacher, who said: "That's like Gounod, when he as a baby heard some beggar sing in a minor key, and asked his mother: 'Why does he sing as if he were crying?'"

Another musical pleasure of my earlier childhood was singing on the water. When I was six years old we moved to a city near one of the famous lakes of Hungary. We spent the summer vacations and week-ends during spring and fall at a health resort on the lake. I could almost say

in the lake, because we children spent almost as much time in the water as on land.

Every evening at dusk, at the time when at home we would assemble for the singing hour, we went out in a boat, my parents and the two older children rowing, and all of us singing. Singing the same songs, arias, and melodies which filled the twilight hour at home.

There is a special enchantment in singing on the water. My mother's beautiful mezzo-soprano, my sister's extraordinary alto, Father's mellow baritone, and my brother's young boyish voice never sounded so beautiful to me as when we sang on the lake.

A special feature was added when our piano teacher, who during the vacation came once a week from town for a "keep-up lesson," joined the rowing party. He always brought a *tilinkó*. This is a Hungarian shepherd's particular and quite primitive flutelike instrument. He accompanied the family singing on the *tilinkó*. Whenever, in later years, I have been rowing on lakes of many countries, I have always longed for a family singing with *tilinkó* accompaniment.

Another unforgettable feature of our summers on the lake was the exquisite gipsy band

that played twice a day in the park and woods of the resort.

Hungary's musical fame was first established by gipsy bands who played all over the world. They made the Hungarian folk songs known and popular long before the great Hungarian masters presented the world with artistic musical creations. One of the most famous gipsy bands of Hungary was located in the city where we lived, and this band played at our summer resort.

As we hung around the military band at the town where I was born, so we were now—my brother and I—glued to the gipsy band during their playing. It was sometimes hard to leave the lake, but when the band struck up we hurried landward.

Our parents began to take us to theatres and concerts at an early age. We children accumulated a large stock of melodies in our memory. We were like the gipsies: we knew by heart what we once heard.

Another very lively musical recollection was an incident that caused much laughter in the family and among friends to whom the story was told. The schoolroom in our home, where

we had our private lessons and prepared our home work for school, was away down on the corridor, far from the music room and living quarters. One day all three of us were busy around the huge table in the centre. My sister frowned over her French lesson, my brother sprawled all over the table tracing something on a map of the world spread out on it, and I tried to master some intricacy of the primer. Different as our tasks were, we sang in unison and with all our might a Hungarian folk song, utterly unaware that its text was not overpolite. Our minds were on our school work, and the words of the song were merely on our lips. When we reached the climax and sang at the top of our voices, "The devil take my neighbour's wife," loud laughter stopped us.

There was our piano teacher in the door, laughing tears. He tried to be serious, but it was impossible. One peal of laughter followed another until he was exhausted. He had arrived for the lesson and found nobody in the music room. After waiting awhile he started to look for us, and led by our mighty singing came to the schoolroom. The way we were working at our lessons and at the same time singing that not

all-too-proper song seemed to him one of the funniest things he had ever come across.

My first piano lessons were not much of a success. Our teacher was a nice young man, but cleverer as a journalist and painter than as a music teacher. My mother soon realized that under his guidance we would not get a sufficiently solid musical foundation.

The musical pride of the city was Ferenc Gáal, director of the Municipal Music Conservatory. He was one of the greatest of Hungarian pianists, a composer of great merit, and one of Liszt's favourite pupils. His reputation as a drunkard had prevented my parents from engaging him to start our musical education, but when my mother realized that there was no other serious musician available she decided to risk it with "the drunkard."

Gáal was very particular and took private pupils only when they had real talent. My sister and I started to play a duet at the much-dreaded examination. In our nervousness we did our worst, yet after a few bars Gáal exclaimed: "Of course I'll teach them! Of course! They have the stuff!"

This was the beginning of my musical career,

though I did not know it at that time. All the music in the home, my brother's violin lessons, our piano playing and singing, was merely meant to be a part of our general education.

I was slightly over seven years old when the lessons with Gáal Ferenc—as we use names in Hungarian—started. They became the source of unmitigated joy and pleasure. The soiled-linen box had lost its attraction. I was always promptly at hand for the lessons. It was true, Gáal was a drunkard, but we, his pupils, never noticed it.

He managed to interest us in the deeper meaning of music, to overcome our reluctance to practise, and to interest us in the history of music and musicians. He never resorted to methods that would have disgusted us so that we would have dropped the study of music. I remember how cleverly he coaxed me into practising at a period when I was lazy and self-satisfied with my achievements.

Gáal had praised me for something I had played in the lesson. At the end of the same lesson, however, he urged me to practise more.

"But you said I played the sonata well!"

"Of course you did, but that's one more reason

for practising harder. By the way, did I ever tell you what Liszt once told me about his own practising?"

Gáal knew that I devoured every story about Liszt, and he cleverly handed out doses of this musical stimulant instead of preaching or nagging.

"One day Liszt was distressed that his directorship of the Royal Music Academy of Budapest left him so little time to practise," Gáal told me. "When I retorted that he, the wizard of the piano, certainly did not need any practising, the greatest pianist of all ages replied:

"'You are mistaken. I must practise as well as any of you, because if I do not practise one day I notice the difference in my playing. If I don't practise for two days my friends notice it, and if I neglect practising for three days the public notices it.'"

This little story became my law for practising.

Another effort of Gáal's was to deepen his pupils' interest in the lives of those who have created music or performed it supremely well. He often told under what circumstances a composer created the piece we were then studying. Beethoven's upright heroic life, the romance of

Robert and Clara Schumann, Verdi's and Grieg's unshakable simplicity, and countless other human traits of admired and beloved composers made an indelible impression on my young mind.

School was a drab affair and bored me terribly. The piano and singing lessons were the only part of my education I really enjoyed. Our French teacher of those years was particularly tiresome. She was burdened with too great a sense of dignity and was also something of a snob.

One day, when we were even more naughty than usual during the French lesson, Madame B. exclaimed in despair: "But, children, more dignity, *je vous prie.* Remember what you owe your family name!"

"Phew, family name!" my brother exclaimed with great disdain.

Madame B. was horrified at such lack of respect. She reeled off the names of the knighted and titled great-granduncles and granduncles, the distinguished university professors, authors, and editors in the families of our parents. And there was Papa's and Mama's social prestige to be considered!

Well, she had given us exactly the wrong dose. The snobbish lady did not realize that our

parents had instilled in us a good-humoured disregard for titles and had taught us to base our claim for distinction on our own achievements and not on those of relatives.

So when Madame B. quoted some notables of our family I jumped up and said: "I don't care and it can't hurt them if I'm naughty." But Madame B. had very conservative notions about family dignity and explained them at great length, using very difficult French expressions. At last I, too, got snobbish and retorted haughtily:

"Well, the only pedigree I am proud of is my musical pedigree. You see I'm a direct musical descendant of Beethoven."

My French teacher looked at me as if I had gone crazy, but I explained: "You see, it's like this. I am a pupil of Franz Gáal, Gáal was a pupil of Liszt, Liszt was a pupil of Czerny, and Czerny was a pupil of Beethoven. So I am in direct line a musical descendant of Beethoven."

I sat down with great aplomb, feeling that I had crushed my snobbish French teacher. She had tried to kindle my family pride in the conventional way, and I had shown her where my pride was lodged.

This joke of my musical pedigree was quoted again when at my studies in the Budapest Royal Music Academy my piano teacher turned out to be another Liszt pupil.

Franz Gáal and my brother's eminent violin teacher were very proud of the Schwimmer trio and frequently wanted to put us on the concert stage, but our parents very firmly refused to submit us to the excitement of performing in public and also to the danger of getting spoiled by public applause. The only exception during my childhood was our participation in a yearly concert for some public school fund where we played solos, duos, and trios.

I was nine years old when I was first permitted to play in public and lived up to my reputation of being a "wild kitten." I did not want to bow to the audience before I played, and what had to serve as the polite gesture was only a jerking nod with the head instead of the pretty curtsey expected from a little girl on the platform. And when I should have gratefully acknowledged the friendly applause I rushed off unceremoniously, feeling I had done my full duty playing as well as I could.

A few years later my parents asked what

career I wished to choose. Fortunately, they believed girls should be educated for a career just as boys. I declared I wanted to become a professional musician, and soon was enrolled in the National Conservatory in Budapest.

Though I won scholarships and graduated as an artist, I never meant to devote myself to the concert platform. In my early youth I had heard Emil Sauer give a Chopin recital. I felt I could not hope ever to play as superbly as this great virtuoso. My ambition was not to do anything that I could not do as well as the best. The little composing I did was very far from satisfying me. My teachers urged me to become a concert pianist, but I stuck to my ambition to serve my beloved art in another way.

During my childhood I often wondered why so many of my schoolmates hated their music lessons. And when I realized that all of us who were privileged to be Gáal's pupils were happy and keen and interested in our studies, I decided to become a teacher who would make the study of music a joy to children as it was to us Gáal pupils.

This ambition kept me from becoming "a

great musician," but made me as happy as I expected to be in my profession.

A jolt came to my professional happiness when family matters compelled me to leave my pupils and classes in Budapest and settle in the New World.

My American pupils were as gifted as I could wish. Many of them were smarter than the smartest Hungarian pupils I ever had. Yet something was wrong. For a while I puzzled what the matter was, but then the truth dawned on me.

The smart boys and girls, I observed, got along well technically, as well as any European music student. But with a few exceptions they lacked a deep love for music and a general interest in the whole range of the most universal of all arts. Most of them were not interested in the growth of this art or in the creators of music. Music was something superficial in their lives, something that did not matter much except for dancing purposes. They would often play pieces quite well without knowing the name of the composer. And names did not conjure up in their imagination the lives of those whose genius presented us with the great creations

One of my pupils had not the slightest idea

who Beethoven was, though she had had piano lessons for many years before I started teaching her. When I once casually said: "You know, Beethoven once——" she interrupted me,

"Who?"

"Beethoven," I repeated.

"Who is that?" she asked.

I was shocked and desperate. I pitied the girl who had gone through nine years of music lessons without knowing who Beethoven was, and naturally could not know anything of the heroic sweep of his life.

Soon after that shock I had another bewildering experience with a particularly gifted pupil.

"What kind of book would you like for a birthday present?" I asked a boy who was one of my first American pupils.

"A success story," he answered without hesitation.

A few days later he thanked me politely for the present, the biography of a great musician.

"Did you like the book?" I asked, struck by the conspicuous lack of enthusiasm in his thanks.

"Well, I haven't quite read it—yet," he added hastily. Then in a fit of honesty he said: "I like success stories best."

"I know, you told me so, that's why I gave you this book."

"Oh, but that's not a success story, it's a musical book."

"Yes, it is a musical book, but at the same time it is a success story."

The boy was bewildered and so was I at his obstinate insistence that a musical book could not be a success story. At last I got his point. To this boy a success story was limited to one of a business man who had started penniless and managed to make millions of dollars some way or other.

It took a great deal of explanation to make the boy realize that the story of a great musician who started against all the odds in the world and succeeded in becoming immortal was a success story.

Similar experiences ripened in me the desire to open to American children the joy and pleasure contained in the wealth of literature about the great musicians of all ages.

I could not think of a better way to introduce the musicians to the Youth of America than to present them as they were in their childhood. I wished to present the glamour and the pathos,

the romance and the fun, of their childhood, the adventurous path or the smooth start which led them to immortality, or at least to temporary world fame.

I ransacked libraries and old documents for appropriate stories. Sometimes I found that none of the stories published in books of many languages about one or the other musician was as interesting as one I had heard in my childhood from Franz Gáal. Schubert's playing at the inn for the wedding party, for instance, related in this book, does not appear in any of the multitude of Schubert biographies. I cannot vouch that it happened as I have told it. But even if not true—though I hope it is—the story was told by Franz Liszt to my teacher, who told it to me when I learned to play the "Deutsche Tänze."

Music has many great masters whom this book does not present. Some of those included are perhaps not destined to become immortals. But as they have contributed either as composers or virtuòsos or conductors to the happiness of several generations, they, too, deserve our grateful interest.

No other art is so common a possession of all

mankind as music. No other art touches us in joy and sorrow from the cradle through all our life as music does. To no other artists are we therefore more indebted than to those who create music, or interpret it with supreme art.

That the great musicians were children of flesh and blood, that they—even Mozart, the wonder of all ages—played marbles, disliked school, or practising, and liked candy like other boys and girls, that some of them were regular roughnecks, and others perfect angels, that the great musicians were children like any John or Mary, are facts that should bring them humanly nearer to every boy and girl.

I remember how stories heard in my childhood have whetted my appetite to know more of the lives of great musicians. Some of the most fascinating books in all literature have been written by or about musicians. I hope this volume will tempt my readers to dig into the fabulously rich treasury of musical literature and thus enhance their pleasure in, and their love for, music itself.

CHAPTER II

MOZART

Taming the Customs Guard

If ever fairies handed out gifts to a new-born baby they must have been in a particularly generous mood at the cradle of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in the charming Austrian town of Salzburg.

In true fairy stories, however, there is always one wicked imp adding something unpleasant to the treasures her benevolent sisters have been showering over their favourite. There must have been such a mischief maker also among the fairies who endowed Mozart with the wonder of his genius. The bad fairy must have burdened him with something that caused Mozart to struggle in vain all through his life for the proper material reward of his phenomenal artistic creations.

The music he gave the world during the short span of his life is an immeasurable treasure. But how much more he could have created if his generation had freed the utterly unworldly genius from the eternal struggle for a livelihood can-

not be appraised. It is true kings and queens, empresses and czars, princes and princesses, the worldly great of his time, showered him with honours and presents. Titles and distinctions were freely bestowed on him from his earliest childhood, but none of these tokens of appreciation helped to pay the rent or to buy food and clothing. All his life he had practically to slave for them. But as this slaving meant performing or creating music he was never unhappy.

Not even when he was practically starving. "For two days I have been confined to the house with my cold," he wrote once to his father, "but luckily I have very little appetite, for in the long run it would be inconvenient to pay for my board."

Mozart was the most astounding infant prodigy of all ages. His name conjures up the picture of sheer sunshine—of everything that is charming and graceful.

It evokes first of all the picture of a cunning little boy in the fancy dress of a courtier. The Empress of Austria, Maria Theresia, had presented "the little sorcerer," as Emperor Francis I called him, with a court suit of her own son's. We see the little boy of six in the stiff gold-

embroidered suit with lace ruffles and fancy buttons, and with a little gold-hilted sword at his waist. Little Wolfgang was not in the least impressed with his gorgeous suit and played in it just as in any of his simple home-made suits.

Once when he was romping in the imperial music salon he stumbled over the little sword that dangled from his waist and fell to the floor. Archduchess Maria Antoinette hastened to pick him up. Full of gratitude, six-year-old Mozart exclaimed: "You are good, I shall marry you." Empress Maria Theresia, amused by this generous offer, asked: "Why are you going to marry her?" "From gratitude," replied the little boy. "She was good to me, she lifted me up, while her sister stood by and did nothing."

The darling of the gods was hugged and kissed by princesses and queens, petted and admired and loved by everyone who came in contact with the lovely child. And though later the envy, greed, and jealousy of his colleagues tended to bring much worry and trouble, and the indifference of his patrons and the public much misery, into his adult years, Mozart's childhood was one of unmitigated, radiant happiness.

A rare atmosphere of deepest family affection bound the four members of the Mozart family to each other. From his mother Mozart inherited a great sense of humour and his cheerful, sunny, happy-go-lucky disposition; from his father the musical gift.

Leopold Mozart, tne father, was a professional musician and composer and also a greatly appreciated music teacher. He detected early a great musical talent in his little daughter, Wolfgang's older sister, and began to teach her to play the clavichord when she was eight years old. To his great surprise it turned out that three-year-old Wolfgang took as much interest in Nannerl's lessons as did the little girl herself.

The baby boy would climb onto the chair in front of the instrument and daintily touch the keys. He crowed with delight when he succeeded in striking pleasant-sounding thirds and other harmonious notes. The father realized the extraordinary talent of his son and began to teach him little pieces on the clavichord when Wolfgang was hardly more than three years old. And the child was not more than four years old when he began to compose little pieces, which his

father wrote down for him. His playing, as well as the music, he composed at this baby age was of incredible quality.

His ear for music and his memory were miraculous. He was full of fun and mischief, but his pleasures were enhanced if he could combine them with music. A friend of the family noted of Mozart's earliest childhood: "Even his childhood games and toys had to be accompanied by music. When we carried his toys from one room into another the one of us who went empty handed was always to sing a march and play the fiddle."

The genuineness of his incredible musical feats was often doubted. It seemed there was nothing musical he could not do. People often thought his father was playing tricks, using the child as a ventriloquist uses a dummy. And innumerable times the baby—later the boy and the lad—was subjected to most exacting tests.

Many instances of such tests are remembered. The first of these was when Emperor Francis of Austria jokingly told the little boy of six that there was no special art in playing with all the fingers and on an uncovered keyboard. The little chap promptly proceeded to play most delight-

fully with one finger of each hand and later with all the fingers on a keyboard covered with cloth.

Mozart was hardly six years old when his father took him and accomplished little Nannerl abroad. During the following years the children appeared at many royal courts of Europe and played in public performances, exciting everywhere the greatest admiration. "We could open a shop with all the presents, jewellery, swords, laces, shawls, snuffboxes, etc., that are showered on the children," wrote Papa Mozart during one of these triumphant journeys.

From his fourth year onward Mozart composed music that became part of the most precious musical possessions of mankind. Great musical bodies performed sacred music he composed when he was eleven years old, and two operatic works were ready, one of them performed, when he was twelve years old. At the age of fourteen he was already a member of distinguished Music Academies and had been decorated by the Pope with the order of the Golden Spur, which carried the title of Cavaliere. In his delightful letters to his sister, always brimful of fun, Mozart joked about being a Cav-

aliere, but he had sense enough not to use the title seriously.

No honour bestowed on him turned his head or spoiled his childish delight in the gay absurdities in which he liked to indulge. He was no more proud of his miraculous achievements as composer and as pianist, violinist, and performer on the organ than of breathing or eating and sleeping.

There was, however, one musical feat that seemed to him important enough to make him proud. That was when at the age of six he managed to tame the Vienna customs guard. The whole Mozart family had set out in September, 1762, from their home in Salzburg to go to Vienna. By easy stages they reached the imperial residence sometime in October. The family was by that time loaded with presents, acquired at the places where they had stopped en route, and Father Mozart looked with great anxiety toward the duty he was supposed to pay for all the trinkets.

When the officials of the customs house realized that the charming boy of the party was the musical wonder whose fame had already reached them, they engaged the child in conversation.

Soon the clavichord was unpacked, and to their unspeakable delight the child played for the customs guard as he had played for the counts and bishops on the way from Salzburg. After a few pieces on the clavichord Mozart unpacked his baby fiddle and played in his inimitable way so that the hearts of the customs guard melted. In their rapture over the child's performance they waived all claims for duty, and the much relieved father carried his family "duty free" to town.

"Orpheus tamed mere animals with his music," the proud father would relate; "my son, however, tamed the customs guard, and that's a great deal more difficult."

CHAPTER III

EDWARD MacDOWELL

A Bargain in Practising

The child who, in to-day's language, was to put America on the musical map of the world would probably have been called a sissy if he had been born into a later generation.

How his playmates would have harassed the sensitive boy whose blue eyes looked hungrily into a world beyond the visible! Who actually preferred unstained garments to dirty clothes and who didn't even wince when his ears were washed. Boys of his age to-day would easily suspect him of unwholesome weakness because he visibly suffered from every coarseness, whether in sound, colour, or deeds.

The boy who had no taste for dirt and filth, who daintily cleaned himself of a smudge on his face, would have had to go through many hard fights to prove himself a regular boy if he had been of the present generation.

Fortunately, the great talent that slumbered in Edward MacDowell was permitted to ripen into a gorgeous gift to humanity without the

waste of such boyhood tests, and happily he was also spared the waste of a struggle for recognition of his talent. Edward had many great talents, but the best, the greatest, was his genius for music.

Americans and foreigners alike are in the habit of denying the American character of New York. They claim that no real American trait can evolve in this cauldron of foreign blood. Yet the first, and to this day the greatest, American musician was a real New Yorker. Born and raised in the heart of this city, it is MacDowell who entitles New York to pride in its musical significance for the whole world.

Born in Clinton Street, playing games on the sidewalks in the Bowery district, experiencing the enchantment of fields and woods and birds in Central Park, pupil of the city's public schools—Edward MacDowell's life was rooted in New York. And though he branched out and nourished his talent from many other sources—France and Germany particularly contributing powerfully to his musical development—New York can proudly claim him her own.

His childhood in the simple middle-class family of Quakers was happy, hardly different from

the childhood of other boys of his class. Indeed, his life was so uneventful that his biographers find little to tell about Edward MacDowell's boyhood. No early manifestation of his musical genius foreshadowed the magnificent gift with which he was to enrich mankind. He disclosed early an unusually deep imagination, but it expressed itself in stories, poems, and drawings before he had anything to say through the medium of music. And so clever were his drawings, so fanciful his poems and stories, that he might have become a painter or a writer or a poet if an incident had not brought music into his life.

Edward was about eight years old when his mother got acquainted with a young man who had come from Bogotá in Colombia to New York. Señor Juan Buitrago had run away from his family, who wanted him to become a priest, while he was burning to be a musician. In New York he was looking for pupils to earn money for musical studies in Europe. Mrs. Thomas MacDowell, anxious to develop every artistic strain in Edward, asked Señor Buitrago to test his musical ability. She believed that Edward, whose unusual imagination expressed itself in so many ways, was also musically gifted. Buitrago found

Mrs. MacDowell's hopes justified and started to teach Edward the piano.

The boy took to music enthusiastically. But that does not mean that he liked practising on the piano any more than other boys of his age. His mother and Señor Buitrago had to keep a sharp eye on him if they wanted him to practise. As soon as they turned their back Edward tried to escape the drill. He did not, however, leave the piano; he only closed the music book and instead of playing once, twice, three times, ten times, as he was bidden, those tedious scales and études, he began to roam on the piano, picking out tunes of his own imagination.

Later, when as a student of the great European musical institutes he did work as hard as any musician ever worked, to acquire the technical skill of an accomplished pianist, he liked to remember gleefully an episode of his early training.

Edward once got hold of a new story book and could not tear himself away from it, though he was expected to do an hour's practising on the piano. He wanted to read, yet practising *had* to be done. The conflict between duty and pleasure was presently decided in favour of pleasure. For two pennies he hired his elder brother

Walter to bang the piano for an hour to fill the house with musical sounds. Edward settled luxuriously to his reading and, engrossed in the stories, forgot all about practising. Walter conscientiously banged the piano for the bargained price. The trick, however, did not remain undetected.

A visitor came to call on Mrs. MacDowell. The lady entered the parlour and came upon Edward lying on his stomach absorbed in his book and Walter banging the piano his two pennies' worth. The trick cost Edward an extra hour of practising besides the two pennies.

MacDowell liked to tell this story to mothers of his pupils who despaired of their children's musical education when there was trouble with the practising.

Edward MacDowell, the first composer whose genius forced the world to take notice of American music, was also a brilliant performer. As pianist, he added to the happiness of all those who were privileged to listen to his performances on the concert stages of Europe and the United States. And he achieved that in spite of the fact that as a child he had hated practising like any ordinary boy—or girl, as to that. As music tea-

cher, Edward MacDowell inspired and developed many a talent. As the first great American composer he will live as long as music will remain one of the chief sources of human happiness, that is, forever.

CHAPTER IV

FREDERIC CHOPIN

A Musical Sleeping Powder

A bridal party serenaded the manor of a Polish feudal family in the late hours of the afternoon on the 22d day of February, 1810. And while the jubilant song of the chorus went up into the crisp winter air a baby was born in the modest annex of the mansion. Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin's first cry mingled with the joyous song of the serenaders. He arrived in this world on the wings of song. And his whole life was destined to be one of harmony and music.

Even before he was born, music played a rôle in his fate. His father, Nicholas Chopin, a cultured gentleman and highly respected educator, fell in love with a girl chiefly because she had a beautiful voice and played the clavichord—the piano of that time—most charmingly. One spring evening, when pretty Justine Krzyzanovska finished singing one of the delightful melodies, Nicholas Chopin asked her to become his wife.

Their first child, Louisa, showed early that

she had inherited her parents' musical talent, but Frederic, as a baby, did not manifest his heritage. While his baby sister would join her mother in singing little folk songs, Frederic cried bitterly whenever his mother or his nurse sang for him. Poor Mrs. Chopin was terribly disappointed, but her husband tried to comfort her. "Never mind, my dear," he said, "it is a pity he has not inherited our musical feeling. But it does not matter, we will bring him up to be a good man."

Fortunately for Mrs. Chopin's peace of mind, Frederic soon showed more appreciation of his mother's singing and of music in general.

He was hardly two years old when he demonstrated marked pleasure in producing sounds on the keys of the clavichord.

His mother sang and played the clavichord, his father played the violin and the flute, and there were frequent musical parties in the home. Frederic disclosed more and more that he enjoyed music. He liked to climb on the chair and pick out harmonious chords on the instrument.

He was less than five years old when one night he stealthily left his little bed and tiptoed into the sitting room. His frightened parents followed

the child, unseen by him, and were overcome with wonder when Frederic started to play the dance melodies Mrs. Chopin frequently played. There was the tiny delicate boy in his nightshirt, playing one melody after the other, the whole dance repertoire of his mother.

The parents were amazed by the child's astonishing performance. After that Louise, the seven-year-old sister, started to give her baby brother regular lessons. Frederic made splendid progress under the guidance of his very gifted and admired little sister. At the age of five he began to invent melodies and variations, which his sister noted down, as he could not yet write.

That his gift for music was extraordinary became more evident from day to day. His parents realized that he needed a more accomplished teacher and secured the best possible master to direct his musical education.

It is significant of Chopin's generous disposition that he attributed to this teacher a far greater share in his achievements than Mr. Voyciech Zyvny himself ever claimed. When Chopin once was praised for his brilliant playing he said: "Well, I was Mr. Zyvny's pupil.

And even the greatest ass had to learn something from Mr. Zyvny!"

In spite of the extraordinary manifestations of his musical gift, the parents did not prepare Frederic for a musical career. He was of delicate health, and the parents concentrated on making him physically fit. Music was to be merely a part of his education as it was a part of the culture in their refined home. Frederic himself was not exclusively bent on music. He went willingly through school. He had also remarkable histrionic gifts and drew excellently. Particularly his caricatures were considered of decided artistic value.

Though of delicate health, and therefore kept from full participation in his friends' rougher plays, Frederic was full of fun and exceedingly fond of playing tricks. But his practical jokes were never offensive, because he played them in the graceful way that marked him through all his life. There are few musical geniuses whose childhood abounded so much in pleasant episodes as Chopin's. The gentle, loving, and refined family, in which the parents were living examples of unselfish devotion and tenderness,

was the happy background of Frederic's multitude of boyish pranks.

Like the other members of his family, he was endowed with a great sense of humour. When he was fourteen years old he organized, with his younger sister Emilia, the "Literary Amusement Association," in which he enrolled also the pupils of his father's boarding school. In the same year he started a newspaper, which was in reality his diary during the summer vacation in the country. The few existing copies of this "newspaper" are full of exquisite fun. In imitation of his country's great newspapers he divided his "publication" into columns, devoted to "National Memories," "Home News," and "Foreign News." Even a censor was not lacking. The Polish press was at that time under Russian censorship. Frederic's newspaper had a gentle yet very exacting censor in the daughter of the house he was visiting. She mercilessly censored jokes that seemed to her too sharp, and once even confiscated a whole issue, which prompted Frederic to an appeal to the censor:

"Please, Mr. Censor, let me be,
Let my long tongue have action free."

Among the "Home News" in Frederic's newspaper we find such items as: "Last night a cat that stole unnoticed into the women's room broke a bottle of fruit juice. But though on the one hand it deserved to be hanged, on the other it is worthy of praise, for it chose to break the smallest bottle."

As a music critic he wrote in the same issue about a pianist: "The virtuoso played with such feeling that almost every note seemed to come, not from his heart, but from his powerful belly."

In the legal news we learn that "in Bocheniec, a fox ate two defenseless ganders. If anyone catches him, let him inform the Bocheniec Law Court, which will undoubtedly punish the animal according to law."

In another issue Frederic informed his readers that "on the 26th, at Kurnik, a freak chicken was born. This scarecrow had two legs, one wing, no back parts, and no head. The chicken's governess is trying, if she possibly can, to send it to Warsaw or some other capital, so that it may be examined and given a place among the most peculiar phenomena of nature."

One day an important item of foreign news was this: "A certain great lord from the neigh-

bourhood, in spite of the strict search by the customs guard at the frontier, smuggled out three sticks under his cloak, for he got them on his jacket at the Golub Fair."

To share with his readers his pleasure in a newly learned mazurka he had heard a peasant girl singing, he published the words of the song:

"Look behind the mother turkeys
How the wolf is dancing,
It's quite clear he has no wife
And that's why he is prancing."

Another bit of foreign news told: "At Radomin, on the 29th, a cat went mad. Fortunately, it did not bite anyone, but ran and jumped in the field, and that only till it was killed, for after it was killed it stopped and didn't play the fool any more." In the same column, another animal tragedy: "At Dubnik a wolf ate a sheep for his supper. The sorrowful guardian of the remaining lambs offers the tails and ears to anyone who catches the wolf, binds and brings him to the family council for the 'question'."

During this vacation in the country Chopin once entertained his hosts by playing the "Village Jew Merchant" on the piano. The master

of the house called in the village's milkman, who was a Jew. He introduced Frederic as a "Yiddish virtuoso" and asked him to repeat the performance of the "Village Jew Merchant." When Frederic had finished the piece the gentleman asked the milkman what he thought of the "Yiddish virtuoso."

Frederic reported the event and the Jewish milkman's answer in this item of his fancy newspaper: "On the first day of the month, Pichon Esq. (this was the name Chopin had given himself as editor) was playing the 'Village Jew Merchant' on the piano, when Mr. Dzievanovski called the village Jew milkman and asked him for his opinion of the Yiddish virtuoso. Mose came up to the window, poked his humpy, lofty nose into the room, and listened, saying that if Pichon Esq. would consent to play at a Yiddish wedding he would earn at least two thalers. This pronouncement encouraged Pichon Esq. to study that kind of music as much as possible, and, who knows, perhaps he may devote himself altogether to such profitable harmony."

But above all, Frederic liked to make musical jokes. One of these was not only a clever joke, but also an extraordinary musical feat.

Chopin's father kept a boarding school for boys. One day the lads were so unruly that the head teacher was at a loss what to do with them. Frederic came to his aid. He asked the boys to come to the piano. He offered to tell them a story about robbers and to illustrate it on the piano.

A story about robbers was more interesting than their own rumpus, so the boys assembled round the piano and Frederic started to improvise the story and its musical accompaniment.

He described in word and music a successful robbery. Afterward, the robbers withdrew into a dark forest and by the light of the moon divided the spoils. Chopin then described how in the thickness of the forest the robbers fell asleep one by one.

While Frederic's fingers described on the piano the drowsiness and finally the sleep of the robbers, his listeners were practically overcome by sleep. One after another closed his eyes. Even the head master fell victim to the spell, and after a while everyone, except the youngster at the piano, was fast asleep. Frederic continued a little longer to roam on the piano. Then he

stole out of the room and asked his mother and his sister to come and watch what he was going to do. Followed by them, he tiptoed back to the piano. After gazing for a moment with hardly controllable mirth at the group of his sleeping victims, he suddenly banged the piano with all his might.

At the terrible sound the pupils and the teacher jumped as if lightning had struck them, to the immeasurable merriment of the young wizard who had administered the musical sleeping powder to the unruly crowd.

In spite of the unmistakable manifestations of his genius, the parents continued to oppose his desire for a musical career. They were afraid the physical exertion would be dangerous for him, particularly after the youngest of their three daughters had died of consumption.

As in the case of Georg Frederic Handel, it was a royal personage who took up Chopin's case. Prince Anton Radziwill, the governor of the province, himself a composer and accomplished musician, succeeded in persuading Chopin's father to permit his son to devote his life to music. After graduating with honours from the high school, Chopin was permitted to con-

centrate entirely on music. He became one of the benefactors of mankind, enriching it both as brilliant performer and as composer of some of the most graceful, most tender, and sensitive music ever written.

CHAPTER V

FRANZ SCHUBERT

A Dance In the Village Inn

A shy youngster of eleven, clad in a dull gray suit, stood before his examiners. They were to determine whether he was fit to enter the Imperial Convict in Vienna as a choir boy. It is hard to imagine who waited more excitedly for the decision, Father Schubert or his son Franz. If the boy passed the test the father would be relieved of his heavy family burdens. But for Franz it meant the loss of his home and family life.

While the two were waiting for the decision the inmates of the Convict—as the boarding school of that epoch was called—eyed the boy curiously. The colour of his suit was like that used by millers who handled flour, and there was a general notion that millers were good singers. The boys therefore took it for granted that Franz Schubert was to be admitted as choir boy.

And so he was, indeed, though he was not a miller boy, but the son of a public-school teacher and his wife, a former cook. Franz was

the twelfth of their fourteen children, of whom, however, only five were then alive. It was hard for the sensitive boy to drop from the loving home circle and adapt himself to the rigid discipline of the Convict. Little Franz found some consolation in the gold-laced uniform he got in exchange for his gray suit. A picture exists that portrays the new choir boy in his uniform, which consisted of a low, three-cornered hat, white neckcloth, open-breasted dark brown coat with a little gold epaulette on the left shoulder, bright polished buttons, a long waistcoat reaching over the stomach, knee breeches, and shoes with buckles.

Franz Schubert's charming soprano voice and the musical education he had received since his eighth year at home put him quickly at the head of the musical activities which played a most important rôle in the Convict curriculum, just as music held a most important place in the whole life of Vienna, which city at that time was undisputably the musical centre of the world.

While the boy became preëminent in all the musical matters, he had difficulties with the other courses of the college. Music filled his mind while he was supposed to add figures in

the arithmetic lesson, or to trace mountains and rivers on the map of the world. It is a grim joke to reflect that he did not miss much by failing in arithmetical skill. One of his biographers has compiled the figures of Franz Schubert's earnings and found that in all his life he earned less than one thousand dollars. So there was little need for great arithmetical efficiency. Nor did it matter much that he did not find his way easily in the intricate designs of the atlas in the geography lesson. During the short span of his life Schubert did not travel far, or much. His life centred in Vienna.

But Father Schubert did not realize how little it mattered that Franz neglected other studies to practise music. He hurt his son deeply when he forbade him the home to punish him for unsatisfactory school reports. To the end of his life the older Schubert suffered pangs of remorse when he remembered that his stern punishment prevented Franz from ever seeing his mother again. She died of typhus while Franz was forbidden to come home.

Life in the Convict was terribly hard. There was too little food for the growing boy and that little, far from good. Franz certainly missed

Mother's goodies. While the other boys could make up the lack by buying delicacies with their pocket money, Franz Schubert had to starve because he got only a few cents from his father. A letter to his brother disclosed how hungry the young genius must have been most of the time in the Imperial Convict:

"I've been thinking for a long while about my position," he wrote to Ferdinand, "and find that in most respects it is good; in others it could be improved upon. You know from experience that a roll or an apple, or more, can be enjoyed after an eight and a half hours' fast with only a small supper to look forward to. This need has become so pressing that I must change it. The two groschen Father sends me are gone in a few days. If, therefore, I have to depend upon you I hope I might do so without feeling ashamed. (See Matthew 11:44.) So I thought how would it be if you would advance me a couple of Kreutzers monthly? You would never miss them whilst I should shut myself up in a cell and be quite happy. As the Apostle Matthew says: 'Let him that has two coats give one to the poor.'"

This restrained note was characteristic of the

child. Franz did not pity himself. He pointed out that his position was in most respects satisfactory. No doubt his musical activities filled him with satisfaction in general. And how modest his request! Just a roll and an apple a day in addition to the meagre fare. And the cell where he proposed to retire and be happy with the rolls and the apples was far from being comfortable quarters. It was stuffy in summer and terribly cold in winter.

Schubert's creative genius asserted itself in spite of such adverse conditions. One day he blushingly confided to his classmate Spaun that he was composing pieces. Young Spaun had such confidence in his friend's talent that he immediately bought reams of music paper for Franz. And those reams were rapidly covered with Schubert's neat writing. A classmate described later how Franz used to compose while living in the Convict: "It was interesting to see him compose. Very rarely did he use the pianoforte. He often said that would interrupt his train of thoughts. Quietly, and little troubled by the talking and noise of his fellow students, he sat at his little table, a sheet of note paper in front of him, and closely stooped over that and the textbook (he

was very short-sighted) chewing the pen, sometimes playing (as if trying a passage) with his fingers on the table, and writing easily and fluently without many corrections as if it had to be just so and not otherwise."

Franz was very popular among the pupils of the Convict. He had the happy gift of friendship. Throughout his tragically short life Franz Schubert was always the gay centre of groups of friends united in love of music, poetry, and the other arts.

Schubert was less than fifteen years of age when his voice changed and he had to leave the Convict. A sheet of the Convict's music exists in the Schubert Museum that bears the scribbled remark: "Franz Schubert crowed for the last time July 20, 1812."

A few months later the boy was confronted with the question of how to earn a living. At that time war-ridden Austria was so short of soldiers that it called even its boys to the colours. Schubert was in danger of being called into the army. To avoid that he decided to become a teacher, because teachers were exempted from military service.

While preparing for an educator's career, Franz continued to compose as he had done all the time in the Convict. A world of melodies blossomed out of his music-filled mind.

It was during this period that Schubert once on a spring Sunday climbed the wooded mountains around Vienna and stopped at a little village inn for rest and refreshments. He found the inn full of gaily dressed but utterly dejected people. It was a bridal party which looked, however, gloomy, like a funeral party.

Schubert asked the innkeeper, who himself looked the picture of despair, what the matter was. The man told him that the village had two inns and one band which used to play alternately in the two inns. The mischievous owner of the other inn had on that particular Sunday bribed the band to play at his inn, though it was not his turn. And here was the bridal party expecting to dance after the meal and no band to play for them.

"Is that all?" said Schubert. "Let me help you out."

The innkeeper looked suspiciously at the fellow who without any instrument offered to help

him out. He saw only an undersized, plump youngster, with schoolmasterly steel spectacles, in rather shabby city clothes.

"How can you help me out?" he replied gloomily. But Schubert had already noticed what he needed. Without further words he sat down to the dilapidated piano. After striking a few chords, he began to improvise dance music. His stubby fingers ran over the keys nimbly, and joyous tunes floated magically out of the wretched old instrument. Faces lit up, bodies began to sway rhythmically, and a few moments later the chairs and tables were hastily and noisily shoved away.

While at the other end of the village the miserable band was squeaking and groaning out its crude dance music, this inn was converted by Schubert's magic into a royal ballroom.

Some of Franz Schubert's immortal "Deutsche Tänze" were born there and then, improvised for a poor peasant party by the incomparable genius to whom a world became indebted for his creations. Whether he wrote the melodies that welled out of the fountain of his musical imagination without an instrument at hand, or whether he improvised on fine or poor instru-

ments, it was always music, sheer music, that he created.

His great contemporary, Robert Schumann, said of Franz Schubert: "Whatever he glances at with his eye, whatever he touches with his hand, everything turns into music."

CHAPTER VI

GIUSEPPE VERDI

How a Box on His Ears Opened the Way to His Career

In an Italian village, so tiny that it was not even marked on the map of that beautiful country, there was a little inn. So small was the inn in the tiny village of Roncole that its owners, the peasants Carlo Verdi and his wife, had to sell groceries and liquor in addition to innkeeping to make a meagre living.

On the 19th of October, 1813, the cry of a new-born baby filled the poor little peasant inn. That baby was destined to fill the world with the creations of his musical genius. Wherever people sing or play a musical instrument Verdi's music is sung or played. Peasants tilling the fields, labourers bent under heavy loads, women washing their linen in gaily running brooks, hum or whistle tunes out of Verdi's innumerable operas. And in every opera house in the whole world Verdi's operas are played and sung to audiences never tiring of them.

Baby Giuseppe was only a few months old

when foreign armies invaded the country and passed the small hamlet, devastating it in martial fury. The terror-stricken women and children crowded for safety into the village church. But the soldiers did not respect the retreat. They forced their way into the church and blindly slaughtered the little crowd. Only one woman escaped with her child. In the midst of the horrible scene she managed to drag herself and her baby to the steep staircase which led to the belfry and succeeded in reaching that retreat. It has been justly said that Verdi owed his life twice to his mother. For the same reason we can say the world owes the wealth of Verdi's sweet and great melodies doubly to this good woman.

Under the humble roof in the dust-covered only street of Roncole the shy and modest boy grew up, the pride of his parents. Giuseppe was a reserved little chap who did not care to share the plays and gambols of other children. He was rather given to solitary meditation, to moods quite unusual for boys of such tender age. He listened to inner voices and to harmonies that must have filled his soul long before he was able to express them.

A poor wandering fiddler was the first to recognize the slumbering talent of the boy. This fiddler, whose name—Bagasset—has been immortalized for the influence he had on Giuseppe Verdi's life, used to pass Roncole in his wanderings. When he stopped in front of the Verdi inn to fiddle away some tunes for which he collected a few centesimi from his hearers, he was sure to have one listener who had no coins to throw into his hat. But little Giuseppe paid with something better than money. He paid for the poor fiddler's performance with rapt attention. The grateful fiddler was musician enough to realize what the child's ecstatic appreciation meant, and advised the father to make a musician of his son.

Carlo Verdi was not impressed by the advice. But the child had heard Bagasset speak to his father, and the desire to become a musician was born in him at that moment.

Too shy to press his father with his request, he was fortunately helped by an incident he had no reason to relish at the moment it happened.

He was barely seven years old when on one of the high holidays of the Roman Church Giuseppe was to assist as choir boy at mass. It was

on that occasion that he heard for the first time the organ played, and was so struck by the majestic sounds that he fell into an ecstasy which made him forget his duties as choir boy.

He was supposed to hand the holy water to the priest, but failed to do so. The ministering priest asked for the water once, twice, and three times, yet Giuseppe remained motionless, rapt in the sounds of the organ.

The incensed priest lost his temper and slapped Giuseppe's face so hard that the child rolled down the three steps of the altar. He fainted and had to be carried into the sacristy. When he was restored to consciousness Giuseppe sobbed as if his heart would break. The alarmed parents took him home and did everything to quiet the poor child. It turned out that he cried not because of the physical pains. He suffered more because he felt that the other boys whose company he used to avoid might take a secret pleasure in his humiliation.

In the effort to quiet the sobbing child Father Verdi offered to do for Giuseppe anything he liked.

And lo! the sobbing stopped at that offer as if magic had been wrought.

"Permit me to study music," was Giuseppe's prompt reply.

Carlo Verdi was so shaken by the brutal incident in the church that to the immeasurable pleasure of his wife he consented to give Giuseppe the permission.

The Verdis spent their meagre savings to buy a dilapidated, worn-out spinet from an aged priest. Master Baistrocchi, the aged organist of the church, started to give Giuseppe lessons. There was no happier child in all Italy than the son of the innkeeper in Roncole. The hamlet, too little to figure on the map of the country, became one of the most famous places in the world of musicians because it is the birthplace of one of the greatest composers of the Nineteenth Century.

A happy and long life, devoted entirely to the creation of the music which endeared Verdi to the whole world, followed the slap in the face which opened his career as a musician.

And even at times when life was unkind to him, music lifted him above temporary suffering, just as the grace of his melodies help to transform our moments of depression.

CHAPTER VII

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

A Childhood Without Fun

Where the mountain ranges along the Rhine slope down to soft lines of wooded hills an old German town nestles in quiet charm. There is nothing particularly interesting in good old Bonn am Rhein. Generations of students have played their pranks around its University. Citizens, man, wife, and children, to this day like to sit with their glass of Rhine wine in the inns on the bank of the great river.

In Bonn life moves in a slow and monotonous rhythm. Tourists would pass it, hardly noticing it as anything but a pleasantly insignificant place if—— Yes, if the name of Beethoven were not connected with it. Beethoven's name raises Bonn, as the birthplace of one of the most extraordinary of humans, to a distinction second only to the distinction of Bethlehem.

In a quiet side street of the altogether not very noisy little town stands the house where the master of masters, the greatest musician of all ages, was born, in a tiny bare attic over a back yard.

Science, painting, sculpture, literature, poetry, and architecture all have a number of men who are considered "one of the greatest" in their field. In no sphere of human achievement, except music, has one single outstanding figure ever been unreservedly acknowledged as "the greatest" above all others. This is a distinction no mortal shares with Beethoven. There is no dissension in the opinion that Beethoven is the greatest musician that ever lived.

And this greatest of all musicians was also one of the greatest human beings of all ages: A sublime character, with a fiery soul and unbounded goodness toward his fellow human beings.

There was no fun for him during his childhood, and in later years this incomparable musical genius became deaf. Yet the man whom life cheated out of personal happiness lived to give joy and happiness to others, to the whole world. Ludwig van Beethoven was a superman in the noblest sense of the word.

A drunkard of a father cheated him out of his birthright: a happy boyhood. Numberless books have been written about Beethoven. One searches them in vain for any evidence of boyish pranks, plays, or pleasures.

At the tender age of four we find him already lashed into practising the harpsichord and the violin for hours and hours at a stretch. The father, bent on squeezing a living out of the baby child, mercilessly kept him from play or recreation. The mother, mortally ill, was too feeble and crushed by her overbearing husband to protect her child against the father's fiendish cruelty. The only pleasure Ludwig van Beethoven could steal for himself was reading—reading anything printed he came across. At the age of eight he had already been made to play at a public concert in Köln am Rhein with the sole purpose of earning money for his father. There exists a piano piece he composed at the age of ten. And three of his piano sonatas were published when he was thirteen years old.

Greedy to make the most of Ludwig's talent, the father placed him at the age of eleven in the theatre orchestra of Bonn and two years later he let the boy take employment as organist in the chapel of Duke Max Franz. Through all these years the father's own occupation was chiefly drinking. Drinking alone and in the company of fellow drunkards. One of his drinking partners became Ludwig's first piano tea-

cher. This teacher lived with the Beethoven family. Very often the father and the teacher would come home around midnight when the inns were closed. The two drunken men would drag the poor child from his bed, rouse him brutally until he was fully awake, and at such extraordinary hours give him music lessons, after which the unfortunate victim was set to practise into the small hours of the morning.

In all the reminiscences of contemporaries there is only one record of anything like a boyish prank played by Beethoven. As organist of the ducal chapel, he once offered one of the church singers a bet. He proposed to throw Mr. Heller, the singer, out of countenance by playing bold variations during the singer's recitations of the Lamentations on Good Friday.

Mr. Heller felt so sure of himself that he accepted the boy organist's challenge. To the great consternation of the people at Chapel on Good Friday, Beethoven did succeed in distracting the singer and winning his bet. This meant, of course, also winning the reproof of his patron, the Duke Max Franz.

This poor little practical joke is the only

one recorded of Beethoven's boyhood. The master in whose youth there was so little of the joy and happiness other boys enjoy, kept his spirit from bitterness and self-pity.

"Music ought to create and fan the fire of the spirit of man," said Beethoven once. His music, more than the compositions of anyone else, certainly fanned his own spirit as well as that of man. The more life hurt him, the more sublime rose his own spirit over his sufferings. To be good was his supreme moral code. From childhood to the end of his life, closely connected with royalty and feudal aristocracy, he kept a proud independence, declaring: "I recognize no sign of superiority in mankind other than goodness."

He was a spiritual hero, the hero of the heart and mind to whom we will always owe a debt of gratitude for the unsurpassed joy and happiness he showered on us through his music, and also for the magnificent example of his life.

His was a heart that embraced all mankind. He was giving, always giving the superb gift of his genius, and he found inner happiness in pouring out the most magnificent music as an ex-

pression of his passionate love for all humanity.

Deaf, ill, often struggling with poverty, in his old age ill treated by a beloved nephew, just as he had been ill treated in his childhood by his father, Beethoven never lost the capacity to rise above the tragic fate of his life. He created harmonies which enable us to forget sorrows and worries and to be carried into the sphere of highest aspirations. The great American poet Edna St. Vincent Millay has justly said in a poem, "On Hearing a Symphony of Beethoven": "This moment is the best the world can give." Beethoven, the towering genius, who hungered for joy and happiness and even as a child was deprived of his share of them, created music breathing love, joy, and happiness—for others. The supreme expression of his noble soul's unbounded love for humanity is the Finale of his last work, "The Ninth Symphony," the choir to the words of Schiller's "Ode To Joy":

"Praise to Joy, the God-descended
Daughter of Elysium!
Ray of mirth and rapture blended,
Goddess, to thy shrine we come.

"By thy magic is united
What stern Custom parted wide,
All mankind are brothers plighted
Where thy gentle wings abide.
Ye to whom the boon is measured,
Friend to be of faithful friend,
Who a wife has won and treasured,
To our strain your voices lend!
Yea, if any hold in keeping
Only one heart all his own,
Let him join us, or else weeping,
Steal from out our midst, unknown.

"Draughts of joy, from cup o'erflowing,
Bounteous Nature freely gives,
Grace to just and unjust showing,
Blessing everything that lives.
Wine she gave to us, and kisses.
Loyal friend on life's steep road
E'en the worm can feel life's blisses,
And the Seraph dwells with God.

"Glad as the suns His will sent plying
Through the vast abyss of space,
Brothers, run your joyous race,
Hero-like to conquest flying.

"Praise to joy, the God-descended
Daughter of Elysium!
Ray of mirth and rapture blended,
Goddess, to thy shrine we come.
By thy magic is united
What stern Custom parted wide,
All mankind are brothers plighted,
Where thy gentle wings abide.

"O ye millions, I embrace ye!
Here's a joyful kiss for all!
Brothers, o'er yon starry sphere
Surely dwells a loving Father."

CHAPTER VIII

CLARA SCHUMANN

The Coach and the Bus

Every time Frederick Wieck looked at his little daughter Clara he had a sinking feeling. He felt that fate had cheated him. His first child had died in infancy and this second one was deaf and dumb. At least, regarded as deaf and dumb.

Mr. Wieck, one of the foremost German piano and vocal teachers, had married a brilliant pupil of his, the pianist Marianne Tromlitz. But while they understood each other in musical matters, they had little else in common. It was an unhappy marriage. And wide-eyed, fragile little Clara added to their unhappiness. Mr. Wieck had dreamed of some musical wonder, and there was a little misfit instead of the expected musical genius. Clara did not look a misfit, it is true, but the desperate parents could not consider her anything else, because she reached and passed the age when babies begin to talk without starting to form words.

The years rolled by. Clara became two, three, four years old, and no word had passed her lips

yet. It was the more remarkable that the mute baby could play little dance pieces on the piano. Clara was nearly five years old when she began to form a few words, but even then her parents thought her deaf, because she did not seem to understand when they tried to speak to her. The child was less than five years old when the parents were divorced, and after she had been a few months with her mother, Mr. Wieck claimed Clara for himself. A few days after her fifth birthday Mr. Wieck started to teach Clara the piano. He hoped active playing of music would improve her speech and her hearing and was richly rewarded in his expectation. Clara's musical achievements, it is true, were more rapid than the noticeable advance in her speaking. Not until she was fully eight years old could she speak like other children. And only at that age did she give full proof of her perfect hearing.

It turned out that her strange deaf-and-dumbness had not been an inherent defect but was caused by a neglect on the part of her parents. Mr. and Mrs. Wieck left Clara, during the short years of their unhappy marriage, entirely in the care of a servant. This girl was good-natured, yet utterly unfit to take care of the infant. She

was taciturn and never talked to her little charge, nor took her into the company of adults or other children who might have talked to the silent baby. The parents stuck to their music, both playing and teaching all day long, so that little Clara practically never was taught to speak. No wonder the little girl grew up without being able to speak or to understand if something was said to her. But like the ugly duckling turned into a swan, so little Clara Wieck was transformed into a perfectly normal child whose extraordinary musical gift made her the wonder her father had dreamed of.

Clara Wieck, who became immortal under her husband's—Robert Schumann's—name, was one of the greatest pianists of all ages. No allowance needed to be made for her because she was a woman. She was a supreme expert on the piano, the equal of any of the greatest virtuosos. Under her father's guidance, Clara's plump little hands developed marvellous skill. But her own inclination, as well as her father's serious musical ambitions, steered Clara's studies beyond mere brilliancy in playing. When the little girl was left alone at her beloved instrument her improvisations revealed the depth and the tenderness of

her feeling, the charm of her blossoming personality, and the strength of her lovely character.

Between her sixth and eighth years little Clara Wieck often delighted private parties of music lovers with her performances, and her fame had gone far beyond her native city of Leipzig before she ever appeared in public. The diary Clara's father made her keep from earliest infancy reassures us that the preoccupation with music had not spoiled her taste for less exalted pleasures. She noted in her diary with equal delight the success of her performances before some great musical authorities and her visit to the side shows of the world-famous fairs of Leipzig. "I have seen the wax figures, the freak animals, the prestidigitator from Paris, and the Panorama of Gibraltar," little Clara confided in her diary. In the same entry she reported her playing and singing for some great musicians and music lovers. At one of these musical parties Robert Schumann met her and was so charmed by the extraordinary performance of the nine-year-old child that he decided to become her father's pupil—a decision that led to one of the greatest romances among musicians.

Little Clara, who was to become the inspira-

tion and happy wife of Robert Schumann, chose him right away as her favourite friend. She admired his compositions, she liked his playing, but beyond all she delighted in the riddles he invented for her, in the fairy stories he told, and in his ghost stories that made her shiver.

When her father remarried he took Clara along with his new wife on a trip to Dresden. Here, too, the little girl played in private parties for great musicians and music lovers, and delighted the inmates of the Institute of the Blind with a recital.

In her diary she dutifully noted the enthusiastic appreciation of her playing in Dresden and then expressed her pleasure in the beauty of the city and its envirous. But one can imagine the twinkle in her eyes when she added to her Dresden entry: "But above all, I enjoyed playing with little Ida and Thekla in Simon's orchard with the little lamb and under the cherry trees and the raspberry and gooseberry bushes. I certainly had my fill!"

Three months later came the great event of her life, her first public concert in the *Gewandhaus* of Leipzig, at that time the most important concert hall in the world.

All her life Clara Schumann liked laughingly to tell of an adventure that nearly ruined this great event.

Unspoiled as the nine-year-old child was, the first public appearance in that important concert hall interested her chiefly because of a certain custom in connection with playing there.

The *Gewandhaus* administration used to send a beautiful stately glass coach to fetch the performers to the hall.

Little Clara, whose father took her frequently to concerts, watched artists arrive in that wonderful coach. On the evening of her first concert she waited with great dignity to be fetched.

A footman arrived at last. "The coach for Miss Clara is waiting," he announced. With due solemnity she stepped out of the house. But what a disappointment! Instead of the beautiful and stately glass coach there was a clumsy bus. And in the bus a number of gaily dressed girls. The footman lifted her into the bus and off they trotted. Tears welled up in Clara's eyes. But worse was to come. A few blocks farther on the clumsy vehicle stopped and another gaily dressed girl was ushered into the bus. And then another, and at several stops several more girls.

The child was perplexed and finally grew alarmed when she realized that the carriage was not proceeding in the direction of the concert hall. With palpitating heart she at last timidly said to the girl sitting next to her: "Please, we are not going in the right direction. This road does not lead to the *Gewandhaus*." "*Gewandhaus!*" the girl exclaimed. In the best Saxon cockney she continued: "I should say not! We are going to Eutritzsch."

Little Clara had not the slightest idea what that meant, and too timid to ask questions, she began softly to cry. The other girls paid no attention to the wretched little creature but a few minutes later loud shouts stopped the bus.

Clara Wieck was lifted out and to her unspeakable relief found the *real* beautiful glass coach waiting for her. It turned out that there was a party in a suburb to which the girls were fetched in the bus. Among those to be taken to the Eutritzsch party was another Clara, the daughter of the janitor in the house where the Wiecks lived. The man had called, "Here is the coach for Miss Clara," and little Clara was put into the bus instead of the janitor's daughter.

When the beautiful glass coach reached the

Concert Hall, Clara was still in tears and excited about the adventure. Her father was not less excited with fear that the event might spoil the success of her first public appearance. But he saved the day. Handing the child a box of candy, he said casually: "Oh, darling, I quite forgot to tell you that one is always first mixed up with someone else if one plays for the first time in public." And as Clara trusted her father as firmly as she believed in Santa Claus, this explanation—and maybe also the candy—restored her balance.

She played that evening as the great artist she already was, and thus started on a career of greatest brilliancy.

Mendelssohn, Chopin, Paganini, Spohr, Robert Schumann, and other great musicians admired the child as a wonder. They lovingly and most enthusiastically encouraged her and spread her fame. So did the great German poets Heine and Goethe. When she first played for Goethe, the grand old man personally fetched a cushion for her, as the piano chair was too low for the little girl.

Royal courts and the public fêted the child virtuoso. Had Clara been less of a real musical

genius, the early praise might easily have turned her head. But Clara was too musical not to be her own severest critic. It happened at a concert that she burst into tears at the tremendous applause, when in her own judgment she had not played well enough to deserve it. "I have not played as I should," she sobbed, instead of smiling to acknowledge the tremendous ovation. And as severe as she was in judging her own performances, as generous was she in acknowledging the art of other musicians—a trait that remained with her all through her long life.

Clara Schumann was also the author of many musical compositions. Her compositions, however, have not stood the test of time.

But the memory of her virtuosity, her infinite human charm, the nobility of her character, the inspiring happiness she brought to that great composer Robert Schumann, her devotion to her seven children, all these make her an outstanding figure among the great musicians of her time, and among the great women of all ages.

CHAPTER IX

EDVARD GRIEG

Once Too Often

If nations were measured by the treasures of art, literature, and science with which they enrich mankind Norway would be one of the great countries of the world. But though we still measure a country's greatness by the number of people living within its boundaries we must give Norway a high place in the family of nations, though it has less inhabitants than Chicago.

One of its greatest sons, Edvard Grieg, has projected all the natural charm and the lofty beauty of Norway on the wings of songs into the whole world.

Like many other musicians, Grieg inherited his talent from his mother, who was a well-trained and very gifted pianist and singer. Mrs. Grieg cultivated music in the home ardently. Besides her own playing of the piano and singing, her husband occasionally also played the piano, and her older son the violoncello. Weekly musicales assembled accomplished amateurs in the

Grieg home in Bergen. Edvard heard his mother also perform in public concerts.

The little boy tried early to do his share. As a baby he loved to finger the piano keys. It was strange that the little boy never attempted to pick out melodies with his tiny fingers but rather endeavoured to discover harmonies. All his life Edvard Grieg remembered the mysterious pleasure it gave him when he first succeeded in striking a full chord, using both his little hands.

Mrs. Grieg started to teach her son the piano when he was six years old. For many years neither she nor Edvard nor anyone else thought of a musical career for him. It was just to be music for the pleasure of it.

The lessons were for mother and son exactly like lessons between any piano teacher and the ordinary pupil. Edvard hated to practise and Mama Grieg was determined that he should do it. Little Edvard tried hard to wiggle out of practising the things that bored him. Fortunately for him and the whole world, Mrs. Grieg knew how to keep him at his studies without disgusting him with music.

He was very unhappy when he was sent to school, which he disliked intensely. He was

much more successful in flunking school than in the evasion of practising on the piano. The little rascal was very clever in inventing excuses to absent himself from school.

Though Edvard disliked school and learning he planned to become a minister. To preach from a pulpit seemed to him the most desirable career. He liked poetry and he liked to recite. Later in life Grieg often told how he pestered the family with his passion for poetry and reciting.

"I thought," Edvard Grieg would tell good-humouredly, "that reciting was an elegant preparation for preaching from the pulpit. My poor family had to listen to endless recitations of mine. But the worst sufferer was my father. Very often when he settled after dinner in an easy chair for a nap I stepped behind a chair which marked a pulpit. Without the slightest regard for my father I would break into long and noisy recitations."

Edvard's progress in music was not extraordinary at all, and there were hardly any signs of an unusual musical talent in the gay yet pensive little boy.

At the age of twelve he composed something in his school music book. He showed the composi-

tion to a schoolmate at an unfortunate moment when his teacher's eye happened to rest on him. The teacher tore the music book out of Edvard's hand and jeeringly read the title: "Variations on a German Melody for the Piano, by Edvard Grieg, Opus 1." The man did not show any interest in the boy's attempt at musical creation. He pulled Edvard's hair until tears of pain filled the boy's eyes. And adding insult to injury, he gruffly bade Edvard to "keep such rubbish at home."

In spite of his noisy recitations Edvard was a shy and sensitive child. The rough treatment of his first composition hurt him deeply. The incident did not improve his love for the school. More than ever did he try to keep away from it as much as possible.

The Grieg home—a country estate near Bergen—was at a considerable distance from the schoolhouse. One of the rules of the school was that pupils arriving late were not permitted to enter the class during the first lesson. Edvard delighted in coming late with the excuse that he had to come from so far.

Later in life Edvard Grieg liked to add with a twinkle in his lovely blue eyes: "You know when

I planned to be late for the first class in the morning I also saved to make the home work for that lesson."

In his infinite modesty Grieg has written very little about himself, though princely royalties were offered him for the story of his life at the time he had become a favourite of the whole music-loving world. Among the few things his friends induced him to tell about his boyhood is the story of one triumph among so many failures in school.

One day the word "requiem" occurred incidentally in the text of a school lesson. The teacher asked whether anyone knew of the name of the composer of a requiem. Great silence followed. Only little Edvard's hand shot up to indicate that he knew.

"Mozart," was his answer. Thanks to the rich musical activities of his mother, Edvard for once was ahead of his classmates. In general he was bored with school and continued to invent methods to evade it.

His most successful trick was to arrive on rainy days so wet that the teacher had to send him home. Edvard had invented a very simple method to achieve this success. Though always

provided with an umbrella Edvard did not open this instrument of protection but used it as a cane. Then he walked in the rain or stopped under a dripping roof until he was soaked to the skin. For a full measure he also waded through the worst puddles. So he managed to arrive in a state which compelled his exasperated teacher to send him home.

Edvard continued this practice until one day he overdid it. Again he arrived wet to the skin. His dripping clothes created a little puddle where he stood waiting to be sent home. But it had hardly rained that morning, only a few drops had fallen from the sky. The infuriated teacher investigated the matter. Edvard ruefully admitted that he had not prepared his lessons and therefore had soaked his clothes artificially as soon as the first drop of rain fell. He had not foreseen that the rain would fail to come down in torrents.

Edvard was about fifteen years old when an event of great consequence happened. One brilliant summer day a dashing rider galloped up the driveway of the Grieg estate. A fairy dream came true. The rider was Ole Bull, the musical pride of Norway. This brilliant violinist, who

ranked with his great contemporary, Paganini, was a romantic figure, the hero of innumerable legends.

Here was the dazzling virtuoso, gaily shaking the hands of little Edvard. Ole Bull was not only a master of the violin but also a fascinating story-teller. Edvard hung at his lips as he poured out the stories of his astounding adventures in America and many countries of Europe where he had played.

The fascinated boy was terribly embarrassed when his mother asked him to play some of his little compositions for the great guest.

Ole Bull recognized the germs of great artistic possibilities in those juvenile trifles. He advised the Griegs to send Edvard to a famous conservatory in Germany, and the parents were immediately ready to follow his advice.

The idea of devoting his life to music came as a flash to the overjoyed boy, yet it took several more years before his full genius asserted itself.

Early during his musical studies in Germany he became seriously ill. From this time on he suffered for the rest of his life from severe lung trouble. Besides this, one of his hands was once crushed

by a wagon. In spite of these handicaps Grieg became Norway's greatest composer and one of the greatest among all of the creators of music.

He was also a great pianist and conductor.

Like his gentle, lovely personality, his music is gentle and lovely. Grieg's "Peer Gynt," his songs and dances, live with us and tell us of the triumph of a rich soul over a frail body.

Grieg's humour, his fiery sense of justice, his love of nature, his affection for his family, his deep love for his happy wife and fellow artist, all these are reflected in his compositions, which made Norwegian one of the world languages of music.

CHAPTER X

FRANZ LISZT

A Red Egg for a Recital

A little dust-covered village in Hungary presented the world with a divine gift. One of its native sons, Liszt Ferenc, as he was called in the Hungarian way, started from this humble place to fill the world with the wonder of his genius.

Liszt's father, a Hungarian nobleman and a gifted amateur musician, was delighted when he detected early signs of musical ability in his son. The child was fragile and suffered much from nervous pains and fevers. Once during a spell of the painful fever little Ferenc collapsed. The disconsolate parents thought their three-year-old darling was dead and ordered a coffin for him. Fortunately, he revived and was destined to live a long and happy life. For many years the sick spells recurred, but he outgrew them by and by.

Franz was six years old when he listened one day to his father playing a concerto on the piano. Adam Liszt was an accomplished pianist and quite absorbed in the music he played. Later

in the evening little Franz strolled into the house from the garden where he had been romping and began to sing. To the immense amazement of his father, the little boy sang the concerto Adam Liszt had played in the afternoon.

"What are you singing, sonny?" his father asked him.

"I don't know," Franz replied.

"Sing it over again," said Mr. Liszt.

Franz obligingly repeated the piece. After this incident Adam Liszt began to teach his son to play the piano. From time to time the studies were interrupted for long periods by attacks of the fever. During his studies little Franz was not particularly fond of practising tedious études but he passionately liked to pick out melodies for himself on the piano. He progressed so rapidly that at the age of nine he was fit to play in a public concert in the near-by town of Sopron.

The child's performance was astounding. Soon afterward he played in the larger city of Pozsony, and here, too, startled the audience with his brilliant performance. Six music-loving Hungarian aristocrats immediately offered to endow Franz for serious musical studies.

Mr. Liszt accepted the offer and soon after-

ward moved with his wife and Franz to Vienna. Serious music lessons were immediately started under the best teacher. Franz progressed rapidly. Soon he could not find pieces difficult enough to practise. He could play the most difficult compositions at first sight and was always searching for something hard enough to play that would need real practising to be mastered.

The desire to become a concert virtuoso first awakened in the child when he heard the famous Hungarian gipsy virtuoso János Bihary. This brilliant violinist gave concerts in Vienna and enchanted Franz with the deep melancholy and the wild fire of his performance. Franz Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies reflect the impression János Bihary made on the little boy's musical mind.

Through his long career, full of homage paid to his genius, no sign of appreciation ever meant more to Franz Liszt than Beethoven's embrace and kiss after the boy's first concert in Vienna.

Beethoven did not care for child prodigies, and for years he had hardly attended any public function. But he had heard such wonderful reports of the "Second Mozart" that against his

habit he went to Liszt's first concert. The child knew that the Master of Masters was present. His teacher, Czerny, and his father were very nervous, afraid that the child would be embarrassed by the presence of the great musician. But Franz, though an unspoiled, modest child, was so sure of himself in the matter of playing the piano that the admired master's presence did not intimidate him at all. To the contrary, the eleven-year-old boy was inspired to the utmost exertion of his genius.

At the end of the concert the audience was in a frenzy of delight. In the midst of the turmoil Beethoven walked up to the platform and embraced and kissed the happy child. It was like a benediction.

Concerts in Germany and Paris followed, with repetition of the success in Vienna.

At his concerts the piano had always to be placed in a position where the whole audience could watch the wonder-child play. People would not have believed that a mere child was producing that heavenly music if they had not seen the wonder with their own eyes.

Franz was twelve years old when the manage-

ment of the Paris Opera commissioned him to write an opera, and performed it as soon as he had finished that work.

Like Mozart, Franz Liszt, too, was fêted and petted by royalty as well as by other music lovers during his concert tours through many countries. While the world admired him as one of the wonders of his time Franz continued to be an unspoiled child. A child, indeed.

He was about twelve years old when he once played for the Duke of Orleans. The later King Louis Philippe was so charmed by his performance that he asked the child to select whatever gift he wished. Franz pointed with glittering eyes to a plaything hanging amid dazzling treasures on the wall: "This harlequin, please!" he asked, as any other boy would.

Through all his life Liszt was utterly indifferent to money and worldly possessions. He enjoyed them only as far as they permitted him to help and serve others.

During his phenomenal career as concert pianist Liszt was a musical missionary. He made it his task to play works of composers whose genius he had recognized before the world knew of them.

At the height of his fame he decided to withdraw from the world and settle in Weimar in Germany as conductor of the Ducal Orchestra. He was thirty-eight years old when he stopped playing the piano for money. From that time on he devoted himself chiefly to composition and teaching. As he refused to play any more at concerts for money, so he also refused to take money from his pupils.

Franz Liszt was the greatest piano virtuoso of all ages. But this is not his only distinction. As a composer, too, he belongs to the first rank. His creative genius has enriched the musical treasure of the world with new forms in composition. He was the first to compose Symphonic Poems and Rhapsodies. By the way, the Hungarian Liszt coined the English word "recital," which has become a standard musical expression of the English language.

Liszt was also unsurpassed as teacher. The most brilliant pianists considered themselves fortunate if he accepted them as pupils.

Liszt's almost superhuman unselfishness and generosity became proverbial. His friends and pupils considered him a saint. But if he was a saint he was a very human one, as he liked

humorously to point out when people embarrassed him with praise.

"I wasn't such an unselfish angel as you describe me," he once said to friends who had just showered him with expressions of admiration for his unselfishness.

"Just let me tell you, and you will see. I remember, as if it were to-day," the silver-haired grand old man began his recollection.

"I was about nine years old and my mother took me for a visit over Whitsuntide to the neighbouring village Nyék. We stopped at the teacher's house—Mr. Haller was his name.

"Ah, I can still see the room and the crowd of people. There was a lovely little girl, too. She had beautiful curly hair, and, more important, she had a beautiful red egg. The little girl and I sat on the floor and played with the red egg.We rolled it around on the floor.

"But the grown-ups wanted me to play on the piano. My mother and Mr. Haller and the guests kept pestering me: 'Franzerl, do play for us. Please play!'

"'I cannot do it,' I answered curtly, and rolled the red egg back to the little girl.

"The grown-ups continued to ask me to play and I stubbornly repeated, 'I cannot do it!'

"At last I got annoyed and said, 'All right, I will play for you if you will give me the red egg.' Mr. Haller promised me the egg and I played. So you see, I was a selfish little rascal who would not play except for a reward."

"Well," said one of the friends, "did you get the red egg?"

"Now that is another question," said Liszt. "The little girl did not want to give up her red egg. Her father coaxed her and finally bought it from her for a piece of cake, ten cherries, and a shiny new *krajcár*."

"So you got the egg," said the friend, satisfied that Liszt had got his reward.

"I am sorry to say I did not," said Liszt laughingly. "The little minx took the piece of cake, the cherries, and the *krajcár*, but she also kept the red egg."

CHAPTER XI

JOSEPH HAYDN

Improvised Instruments

There was once a happy-go-lucky wheelwright who sang to his heart's content as he walked the country in the pursuit of his trade. When he married and settled in the little Austrian town of Rohrau, near the Hungarian border, his workshop, too, resounded with his gay tunes. And on evenings and Sundays the modest dwelling became a veritable centre of music. Mrs. Haydn's gentle voice joined her husband's in duets, and he often also accompanied their hearty singing on the harp. As children grew up in the family, their voices mingled with those of the parents in the daily song-fests.

Little Joseph showed from early infancy particular pleasure at the family singing. He had hardly begun to speak when he already could repeat without mistake any melody his father was singing.

One day the baby boy passed the schoolteacher's house. At the sound of music the child stopped and looked through the window into the

room. He wondered what the man was doing. With intent interest Joseph observed that the man held a big piece of wood in one hand and a slender stick in the other. The man crisscrossed on the big piece of wood with the slender stick, and the piece of wood seemed to emit music.

When Mr. Haydn closed the shop that evening and the family settled to their pleasant round of songs, little Sepperl, as Joseph was fondly called, sat down on the bench near the organ, stretched out his left arm, and with a little stick in the right hand, crisscrossed his arm as if it were a fiddle.

Father and mother, brother and sister, laughed heartily at the sight, but Joseph fiddled away on his left arm as if sounds were pouring out of it. While the simple Haydns did not see more than a cunning babyish trick in his imaginary fiddling, someone who knew more about music recognized something serious in that play.

A relative who was a schoolteacher and choir leader in a near-by town was shortly afterward visiting the Haydn family. Joining the family scene in the evening, he noticed little Joseph's sweet and clear voice and the extraordinary sense of rhythm exhibited in his imag-

inary fiddling with the stick on his left arm. After the children were put to bed this relative advised the Haydns to prepare Joseph for a musical career.

The parents began to discuss the matter. Mr. Haydn was very much pleased with the idea, but the mother thought it would be nicer if Joseph became a teacher or a priest. Joseph himself—about four years old at that time—had no notions yet about his future career. Mrs. Haydn, persuaded by the relative's arguments, agreed at last to let him take Joseph with him to Hainburg and teach him music.

Little did the Haydns and their relative dream what this decision was to mean for the world. Their modest aspiration for their Sepperl did not go beyond the career of a choir leader, or, at most, conductor of a popular band.

This blessed child, however, was destined to become one of the greatest musicians of all ages and a composer of immortal instrumental and vocal music that belongs to the best the musical mind of mankind has produced.

John Mathias Frankh, the relative who taught little Joseph the first technical elements of music, immediately started him to play several instru-

ments as well as to sing. All through his life Joseph Haydn gratefully acknowledged that he owed the solid foundation of his musical eminence to that relative. "Though there was more spanking than eating for me while I was in his house," Haydn liked to add with a smile of recollection.

As choir leader Mr. Frankh had also to coach a band for participation in the religious pageants of his church. Shortly before the procession in honour of Saint Florian the drummer of the band died. Great was Mr. Frankh's distress. There was nobody in sight whom he could intrust with the kettledrum. Yet that instrument was indispensable in the band, which was expected to make plenty of noise while the procession moved through the streets of the town.

In this extremity Mr. Frankh remembered his gifted little relative. Without much ado he told Sepperl to practise the drum and to play it the next day in the band. But there was no drum around, and Mr. Frankh had merely indicated how the drum sticks which he gave the child should be handled.

With this meagre instruction, and without a drum, the six-year-old boy was left to become on

such short notice a drummer. But Joseph had already invented an instrument of his own when his left arm served as a violin and the stick as a bow. His inventive genius helped him now to improvise a drum.

There was a meal basket around which Mrs. Frankh used when she baked bread. It is true the basket was full of corn meal, but it was round. Round as a drum. So Joseph covered the basket with a kitchen rag, fastened that cleverly around it, and started to beat it lustily. He drummed away with such zeal that he did not notice the clouds of corn meal he beat out of the make-shift drum.

Full of pride with his growing efficiency as a drummer, little Joseph was sadly awakened to the unpleasant consequences of his conscientious endeavours. When Mr. Frankh returned he was angry because the whole house was covered with flour. He scolded the poor little drummer severely.

One more difficulty had to be overcome before Joseph could exhibit his newly acquired skill. In the band the man who used to carry the kettledrum on his back for the drummer was so tall that Joseph could not reach it. A carrier of

small stature had to be found, and was found at last in the person of a hunchback.

What a strange sight it must have been! In the midst of a band of sturdy men blowing all kinds of trumpets, a tiny boy beating with all his childish might on a huge drum carried by a poor hunchback. St. Florian must have been very much pleased.

Haydn's practising on the rag-covered flour basket did more than help Mr. Frankh out in an emergency. It was destined to become important for the development of orchestral music.

Out of this incident grew Haydn's interest in the drum. And this led him later to give the kettledrum a more artistic place in his compositions than any composer had done before. The "Pauken-Schlag Symphony" is the most typical fruit of Haydn's use of the drum in his compositions.

The two years in Hainburg were the start to a glorious career. Though not spared periods of great want, even actual starving, Haydn was really never unhappy. He was of such a sunny disposition, so full of genuine humour, that no blow could ever crush him. There were moments of despair, of gnawing hunger, of a night without

a roof over his head, garrets where rain, snow, and wind chilled the air, yet so rich were his inner resources that he never despaired of life.

"When I sat at my wretched worm-eaten piano I did not envy even a king," Haydn once remarked to a friend who had reminded him of a period of great want.

The magnificent compositions of this great musician reflect all the traits of his lovable nature: his deep feeling and sublime seriousness, his good humour and kindliness. As a creative genius he was equal to the greatest masters, many of whom were his contemporaries. Mozart was his friend, and Beethoven was his pupil. These princes of music, as well as the princes and kings of royal blood, were among the multitude of his ardent admirers. Music lovers of many lands showered him with their admiration and gratitude. But no measure of adulation ever spoiled him. To the end of his long and rich life he remained the modest, lovable human being he had been from his earliest childhood.

"Heart and soul must be free," was his slogan. And all his life he lived up to this creed, a noble example to all his followers.

CHAPTER XII

CHARLES GOUNOD

Opera as an Appetizer

Among all of the operas ever composed there is hardly one performed more often than Charles Gounod's *Faust.* The composer of this French masterpiece inherited his talent from his gifted mother, who in her turn was the daughter of a woman famous for her distinguished poetry and her musical talent.

From his father, who was a painter, Charles inherited another artistic talent. Charles was so clever at drawing and painting that great authorities urged him to become a painter.

But music had a stronger hold on him. He showed interest and understanding for music in his earliest infancy. Charles Gounod used to say that his mother gave him music with her milk, because she always sang while she nursed him.

He had hardly learned to speak when one day a beggar sang in front of the Gounod home a melody in a minor key. "Mother," the little boy said, "why does the man sing as if he were crying?"

The mother was overwhelmed with wonder that the infant was able to distinguish the mood of the minor key, which is sadness, while the major key is an expression of gladness.

Gounod's father died when Charles was five and his older brother fifteen years old. The widowed mother was left without funds and immediately started to make a living for the fatherless family. Mr. Gounod had conducted drawing classes at which his wife used to assist him. After his death Mrs. Gounod continued those classes but at the same time also started to teach music.

She was so successful with her classes that soon she had in both of them more pupils than she could teach. Mrs. Gounod gave up the drawing classes and devoted herself entirely to the teaching of music. Her son Charles was among her pupils and, of course, the most gifted of them.

The boy was passionately devoted to his mother and to the end of his life cherished her memory as that of a saint. He was always deeply moved when he recalled what he knew of his mother's childhood and youth.

When at the height of his fame someone once praised him for his devotion to his mother, Gounod exclaimed:

"Is there anything good enough for this woman, whose life from early childhood was unselfish service to her family?"

And with tears of emotion in his eyes he told how his mother at the age of eleven had started to give piano lessons to help support her family.

"In the turmoil of the Revolution my grandfather had lost his position in the low court," Charles Gounod related. "The family faced starvation. My mother, a child of eleven, heroically took on herself all the burden her young shoulders could carry.

"Not content with teaching she tried also to improve herself. She managed to save for a journey to Paris. Three days she travelled in the coach from Rouen to Paris, with the slightest rations of food. In Paris she went straight to Adam, the professor of piano at the Conservatoire.

"This fine musician and gentleman recognized the talent and admired the courage of the child. My mother could not afford to live in the capital or to come frequently to Paris. Professor Adam arranged that she should come once in every three months for a lesson. And, friends," Gounod exclaimed, "on such slender fare the little girl,

my dear mother, managed to become the accomplished musician to whom I owe so much!"

Mrs. Gounod carefully nourished her children's musical talent. Her older son had a beautiful voice and also learned to play the violoncello. But knowing the uncertainty and hardships of an artist's life, Mrs. Gounod did not wish her children to take up music as a career.

Charles was seven years old when he first went to school. His singing teacher was amazed when he found out that the little boy could read a musical score as easily as he read a printed book.

The first great musical event in Gounod's life was his initial visit to the opera. To reward Charles for his good school reports his mother promised to take him to hear Rossini's opera, *Othello*.

The sensitive child got so excited at the prospect that he could neither eat nor drink. But the anxious mother found a way to make the opera an appetizer.

"If you don't eat, Charles, I won't let you go to the opera," she said.

"Mother didn't need to say it twice," Gounod liked to tell. "I began to eat, though I nearly choked with excitement. And I ate a heartier din-

ner than ever in my life. I would have eaten shoe soles or anything if my visit to the opera had depended on that."

The opera transported Charles into ecstasy. The tremendous impression, however, acted very unfavourably on his school work. Instead of doing his lessons carefully as he used to do he neglected everything. He wanted to compose an opera, and during school hours as well as out of school he scribbled on his music paper. That caused much trouble and he was punished in every way. His teachers kept him in school after hours, they gave him extra work, they imprisoned him, but they could not break his habit of writing music instead of paying attention to his school work.

Charles, however, was a very gentle child. When he became aware that his trouble in school hurt his mother's feelings he argued the matter out with himself. What no punishment could achieve his kind heart taught him. He realized that he could indulge in his beloved pastime of music writing if he attended properly to his school duties. He resolved to do so and kept his resolution.

From that time on everything went smoothly

in school. After a while Mrs. Gounod considered it safe to permit Charles to take more serious music lessons along with his school work.

Though Charles made tremendous progress in his musical studies under the guidance of the foremost music teachers of Paris, he did not discuss with his mother the question of a musical career.

A year or two later Mrs. Gounod took Charles to hear Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.

As in the life of other great musicians, Mozart's opera *Don Giovanni* was destined to play in Gounod's life also a decisive rôle. Its sublime melodies made such an impression on the boy that he decided to become a musician whatever obstacle he would have to overcome.

"I assure you," the composer of *Faust* and *Romeo and Juliet* liked to tell in connection with his second opera visit—"I remembered what happened before my first visit to the opera. This time I did not try to escape meals. My mother did not need to threaten me into eating. I ate like a robust woodcutter, though I was as excited as before *Othello*. This time the prospect of the visit to the opera acted like a perfect appetizer."

CHAPTER XIII

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Musical Burglary

Snobbish people like to claim privileges because some of their ancestors distinguished themselves and made the family name famous. If Johann Sebastian Bach had been of that kind he could have claimed distinction on the ground that for two centuries members of his family had been well-known and distinguished musicians.

It was not only in one straight line of the family that Bachs distinguished themselves as musicians. The musical talent ran through all the branches of the family. A bewildering mass of children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, cousins, and relatives of every degree were noted as musicians in the family tree of the Bachs and in the history of music.

At times there were so many Bachs active as church and court organists, choir leaders, composers of church music, music teachers, town musicians, and players of all the instruments used at that epoch that the name Bach was entirely identified with musical activities. In those

parts of Germany where the Bachs lived people called any strange musician whose names they did not know "a Bach."

Johann Sebastian did not need to rely on his ancestry for fame and distinction. It was his unmatched genius that made the family name immortal.

The lovely town of Eisenach in Thuringia was a famous centre of music during the Middle Ages. The ruling princes lived there in the Castle Wartburg. Musical festivals and knightly tournaments alternated in the Wartburg. This famous castle on the top of a wooded hill has been immortalized by the Hungarian composer Franz Liszt in the Legend of St. Elizabeth and by Richard Wagner in his opera *Tannhäuser*.

But Eisenach's greatest claim for fame is the two-story house where Johann Sebastian Bach was born on the first spring day of the year 1685.

Though the birthplace of Johann Sebastian is well preserved, little is known about his early childhood. His father was a violinist employed as town musician. He gave Sebastian the first music lessons, teaching him to play the violin.

Johann Sebastian's mother died when he was nine years old, and a few months later he lost also

his father. One of his many older brothers, Johann Cristoph, was organist of the principal church in Ohrdruff, a small Thuringian town. This brother took the orphaned child into his family, sent him to school, and started to teach him the clavier.

Sebastian mastered the little pieces his brother taught him without any effort and immediately knew by heart everything he played. He pleaded with his brother to give him more difficult compositions to practise, but Johann Cristoph refused to do so.

Printed music was rare at that time. The few copies available had to be copied by hand by musicians who wanted to play new compositions. Johann Cristoph had a book in which he copied the best compositions of that epoch. Little Sebastian implored his brother to let him play from that book, but in vain.

Cristoph jealously guarded his treasure locked up in a latticed bookcase. Sebastian used to look hungrily at the sacred volume. The little genius's heart was set on that treasure and though hardly more than a baby he found a way to get hold of it.

One night when everyone was asleep the little

boy stole into the music room. He stood trembling in front of the bookcase where the treasure was enshrined. Silvery moonlight flooded the room when little Sebastian succeeded in drawing the volume out between the bars of the lattice.

The old grandfather clock in the corner of the room ticked loudly. But the child felt as if his heart pounded more loudly than the clock.

Sebastian revelled in the melodies as he tremblingly turned the pages and read them by the pale light of the moon.

Knowing now how to get hold of his brother's music book, the child got up every moonlit night and copied the compositions into a book of his own.

Sebastian had laboured six months at this extraordinary work when his brother found him out and took his copybook away.

It makes one's blood boil to think of such fiendish cruelty! There was Cristoph's own copy in perfect shape, as Sebastian had handled it with utmost care. And there was the little boy's copy written at the cost of six months' sleepless nights, yet Cristoph treated this unparalleled manifestation of passionate artistic devotion like an act of burglary.

We can imagine how hard the boy's life must have been under the guardianship of a brother who so utterly lacked understanding of the genius in his care. Sebastian was fifteen years old when his brother sent him away to a school in the town of Luneburg. He had a beautiful voice and therefore got an appointment in the school choir, thus earning a meagre living.

Music filled Sebastian's every thought, and every free minute was devoted to his art. If famous musicians played at accessible distances from Luneburg, Sebastian walked to the places where he could hear them. He sometimes walked even fifty miles to hear a musician perform. On one of his pilgrimages the boy was nearly fainting with hunger.

He stopped in front of an inn on the road but had no money to buy food. Sebastian was looking hungrily into the inn when suddenly the window was opened and a few herring heads were tossed out into the road.

In his gnawing hunger Sebastian picked the herring heads from the dust of the road and—found a Danish gold piece in each of them.

After he left school Johann Sebastian entered the service of a prince, and besides other duties

had also to play the violin in the court band of Weimar.

This was the beginning of the most important musical career in all history, because it was Johann Sebastian Bach who laid the foundation of modern music.

Beethoven said of Johann Sebastian: "Er ist kein Bach, er ist ein Meer." (The word *Bach* means "brook" in English. Beethoven therefore said: "He is not a brook but an ocean.") And Robert Schumann expressed what every music lover feels: "To Johann Sebastian Bach music owes as great a debt as a religion owes its founder."

CHAPTER XIV

A BOUQUET OF STRAUSSES

Ten Famous Musicians

The German word *Strauss* means "bouquet" in English. The history of music presents a veritable bouquet of famous Strausses. But while the numberless Bachs who were musicians were all blood relations, the bewildering number of famous musicians of the name Strauss belonged to several families not related to each other in the remotest way.

The identity of their name is merely accidental. And, strangely, all of the Strausses, though of different family trees and nationalities, have excelled in the composition of waltzes and other dance pieces.

Even the Bavarian Richard Strauss, the giant among the musicians of that name, has some waltzes to his credit which the Viennese Strausses would have proudly hailed as genuine Viennese.

Another strange coincidence was the close connection of the most famous Strausses with the drinking trade. Johann Strauss, the father, was born in a little inn in a Viennese suburb, and

Richard Strauss was born in the building of his maternal grandfather's brewery in Munich.

JOHANN STRAUSS AND HIS THREE SONS

Vienna was saturated with song and music which reverberated from every nook and corner of the imperial city. The little inn To the Good Shepherd was a typical suburban place. During evenings and Sundays jolly artisans sat with a glass of light wine, or foaming beer, listening to a simple band, or joining in with their lusty singing. But also gentlemen from the city often came out to the Good Shepherd, famous for its beer and music. The low-ceilinged room was usually filled with tobacco smoke and the odour of the simple but delicious food prepared in the adjoining kitchen.

Franz Strauss and his wife Anna, the owners of the little inn, were the parents of Johann, who became known as the "father of the waltz," and later as the "father of the waltz king," Johann Strauss, Junior.

Franz Strauss died soon after his son was born, and his widow remarried later. Johann, the first, showed musical interest from his earliest infancy.

Whenever the baby disappeared his parents were sure to find him under the table of the musicians, raptly listening to their performance.

He was a friendly and sociable little chap, and a favourite with the customers of the inn. They frequently brought him playthings and other presents. None of the presents little Johann received gave him more pleasure than the little toy violin once given to him. On this mock instrument the child tried to play the tunes and melodies he heard the musicians play in the inn.

The parents did not pay any attention to his marked musical inclination. He was sent to school at the age of six. Johann's teacher fortunately noticed the boy's unusual musical ability and called his stepfather's attention to it. But the simple innkeeper did not attribute any importance to the boy's musical talents.

"We haven't got money to pay for music lessons," he declared. "And, besides, if I could afford it, I wouldn't want Johann to become a fiddler. I know what a sorry lot of vagabonds they are, those fiddlers."

The good man thought only of the fiddlers of his inn and like places. He had not the slightest notion that his stepson might be a musical

genius who would conquer a great world beyond little Viennese beer gardens.

The school-teacher did his best to nurse little Johann's musical talent, but this best did not go far. Johann's father was so anxious to keep him away from music that he soon took him out of school and apprenticed him to a bookbinder.

Johann disliked the bookbinding trade just as much as he had disliked school. Yet he tried to do his duty conscientiously. But his master did not appreciate Johann's good will and frequently punished him severely.

One day the bookbinder chastised him so cruelly that the child could not stand the torture. The master had dragged him by his hair up to the attic and there bound him with a rope to a post.

When the cruel master's good-natured wife released Johann, he took his fiddle in his arm and ran away. He did not go home. He wanted to play in some inn to earn a living. He started toward one of the mountains in Vienna, where a famous inn was located. Exhausted from the severe ordeal through which he had passed, Johann did not reach the inn on the mountain, but fell asleep on the road.

A gentleman happened to pass him who frequented his parents' inn, To the Good Shepherd. The man recognized the sleeping boy and waked him. He gained little Johann's confidence, but when he suggested Johann should return to his parents the boy vehemently protested.

"I want to be a musician, and my parents won't let me. I won't go home," he declared with a determination that greatly impressed his new friend. The gentleman managed to get the parents' permission to take little Johann to his own house and to teach him music.

Johann was little over thirteen years old when this happened. He was the happiest child when his benefactor began to give him serious music lessons!

It did not take Johann more than a few weeks to learn what it took others years of study to accomplish. His fatherly friend introduced him to his own musical circle, and the boy was soon a welcome violin player in private quartettes.

Johann was afraid of being a burden to his benefactor and wanted to earn his living. He was overjoyed when at the age of sixteen a youthful orchestra leader hardly older than he was,

engaged him to join his trio, enlarging it to a quartette. The name of this young musician, Eduard Lanner, became immortal through his association with Strauss.

Eduard Lanner and Johann Strauss started very humbly. Their quartette played in beer gardens and little inns, and the musicians who were destined to become world famous made the rounds of the guests collecting contributions in their hats. A century later an American composer, Irving Berlin, started in the same humble way on his road to world fame.

Lanner and Strauss were fascinating violin players whose brilliant performances were admired by the greatest musicians of their time. As they enlarged their quartette more and more until it became a full-fledged string orchestra, they moved from modest inns into higher and higher circles, until they reached royal palaces, playing at court balls.

Franz Liszt, Richard Wagner, Franz Schubert, Moscheles, and Berlioz were among the great musicians who paid highest tribute to Johann Strauss. They admired him not only as violin virtuoso, but also as composer of waltzes and

other dance pieces which made the world a happier place through their adorable gaiety.

The Strauss-Lanner dance pieces were of such high musical quality that the firm which published Beethoven's sublime music published also some of the Strauss-Lanner compositions. The young Queen Victoria, for whom Johann Strauss played in London, was as enraptured by his playing as any of his humblest Vienna admirers.

Johann Strauss's genius was passed on to three of his sons. One of them, his namesake, Johann, Junior, was destined to surpass his father as virtuoso, conductor, and composer. While most of the other Strausses will live in the history of music on reflected glory, Johann Strauss, Junior, will hold a place of immortality on his own merit.

The home of Johann Strauss, the father, was naturally a centre of music. The house was filled with all kinds of musical instruments. Musicians rehearsed, played, and discussed music. Like his father, Johann, Junior, also showed interest in music from earliest infancy. His father, however, had forgotten his own childhood, and objected to Johann Junior's interest in music, as his

parents had objected to his own musical attempts.

Johann, Junior, secretly practised and played and composed music from the time he was a baby. As soon as his father left the house the little boy would take up any one of the multitude of instruments and try to pick out the melodies he had heard his father and the orchestra play. Johann composed his first waltz at the age of six. Some time later this composition was published and still exists in the music trade.

The father forgot all about his own rebellion against the bookbinding trade into which his parents had tried to force him, and ordered Johann, Junior, to study for a commercial career. The son went to school with the same disgust with which his father had gone through it.

Mrs. Strauss encouraged her son's musical ambition and always shielded him against his father. She helped the boy secretly to get violin and composition lessons, for which she paid out of her own funds.

Always bored with school, Johann one day, instead of listening to his teacher, discussed some musical matter with a classmate during the lesson

in school. In the course of the whispered conversation his friend asked him to hum a melody from their school singing book.

Johann began to hum the melody. Utterly oblivious of the teacher's presence, the hum turned into soft singing. More and more wrapped up in the melody, he began to sing louder and louder, and finished singing at the top of his voice.

The other pupils chuckled and work stopped in the class. The teacher stood aghast at that unheard-of occurrence.

"Who is that impertinent fellow who dares to behave like that?" the teacher thundered, purple in the face.

"It's I," Johann Strauss admitted, somewhat startled by his own performance, yet bravely owning up.

The teacher was so outraged that the school authorities expelled Johann from school. In later years, at the top of his world fame, Johann Strauss used laughingly to say: "They meant to punish me when they expelled me from school. My! They had no idea how happy the punishment made me! It liberated me from the hated school and helped me to get out of the com-

mercial career for which I was preparing. They thought they had crushed me, while they really had opened my way to the musical career on which I was bent."

Johann Strauss, father, deserted his family and left his wife with five children unprovided for. Johann, Junior, now devoted himself openly to the study of music. His teacher was more interested in sacred music than in any other kind. Johann, however, did not care much for church music. He had a knack of playing gay polkas on the church organ. One day his teacher caught him playing some very worldly music on the organ, and burst out into the sinister prophecy: "You certainly will never become a musician!"

Fortunately, the teacher was wrong. Johann Strauss, Junior, did become a very great musician. No other composer has given the world so much gaiety, electrifying dance rhythm, such witty music full of sparkling humour as Johann Strauss, Junior. His waltzes and operettas will never outlive themselves because they are of that beauty that lasts.

As the leader of his superb orchestra, Johann Strauss, Junior, was of irresistible charm. People went wild when he appeared conducting his

splendidly disciplined orchestra, playing the first violin himself. His programmes included the best music. He performed great art music as well as his own sparkling compositions.

It will always be to his honour and credit that he played Richard Wagner's music before the Vienna Court Opera introduced that great composer.

And it was Johann, Junior, who swayed his brothers, Joseph and Eduard, into a brilliant musical career though they had never studied music. Joseph was a builder and Eduard prepared for consular service. Both became world famous as assistant conductors of their great brother's orchestra, later also through their compositions and their own orchestras.

When the United States of America prepared to celebrate the Centenary of the Declaration of Independence, Johann Strauss was invited to conduct the monster concerts in Boston, in honour of the occasion. Later his brother Eduard toured the New World with his whole orchestra.

Johann Strauss lives in the tunes of "By the Beautiful Blue Danube" and other waltzes, and in his operettas, some of which, like *Die Fledermaus* and the *Gipsy Baron*, are performed

in the greatest opera houses of the world, reserved for the highest in the art of music.

When Johann Strauss the older died Johann, Junior, said of him: "My father was, like every great artist, modest to the highest degree. Not for one moment did he put himself on the pedestal reserved for the great heroes of musical art. Yet his art has chased away many a worry, has smoothed wrinkled brows, has raised the spirit of many a dejected person. It has increased the joy of life, consoled sad people, given them joy, made them happy. For all this, the world will cherish his memory."

Nothing better can be said for Johann Strauss, Junior, himself.

Besides these four Viennese Strausses of one family, there was one famous Moravian musician of the name Joseph Strauss; another Strauss, Ludwig, was a Hungarian musician, and Bohemia had its famous Strauss in Edmund.

To our generation belongs another Viennese master of the waltz, Oscar Strauss, best known for his "Chocolate Soldier" and the "Waltz Dream," which are filled with the spirit and grace

of the great Johann's music. Oscar Strauss, though no blood relation, is entitled to call himself a spiritual member of the Vienna Strauss family.

And without belittling the greatest musician of that name, Richard Strauss, the Bavarian, may also be listed as a spiritual member of the Viennese waltz family. Richard Strauss's opera, *Rosenkavalier*, and his *Ariadne*, elevated the light valse opera into the classical valse opera.

RICHARD STRAUSS

Musical Wrapping Paper

Richard Strauss was born in the gayest, most artistic of all German cities, in München, famous for its musical activities, a centre for painting, new styles in architecture, and other arts.

Like the "father of the waltz," Johann Strauss, who was born in the Vienna inn of his father, the Bavarian Richard Strauss was also born in a building devoted to the drinking trade, in the brewery of his maternal grandfather, Pschorr. Richard's father, Franz Strauss, was Bavarian court horn player in the Royal Orchestra and professor of the French horn at the Royal

Music Academy in Munich. He was also the author of some of the finest existing compositions for the French horn. It was he who reduced Wagner's horn call in the opera *Siegfried*, which was unplayable, to its final shape.

Richard's mother and her family were also musically gifted, and the house always resounded with music. Besides father and mother, there was his youngest sister Johanna, their uncles and aunts, and numberless cousins, both boys and girls, who sang and played various instruments.

A delightful atmosphere of family devotion made the wealthy, comfortable home the happy centre of a crowd united in the love for and cultivation of music.

Mrs. Strauss began to teach Richard to play the piano when he was hardly more than four years old, and soon afterward a colleague of Mr. Strauss in the Royal Orchestra was intrusted with his serious teaching.

Though everyone recognized the great musical talent in the infant boy, his education was not different from that of other children. He was sent to school at the age of six and at the same time began violin lessons.

Richard knew how to write music before he learned to write ordinary letters, and began to compose when he was seven years old. The family sang and played his compositions, songs, pieces for the piano, sonatas, orchestral works, chamber music, and other things. At the age of seven he improvised a charming dance piece to induce his four-year-old sister to dance. While he played his father wrote down the piece, highly cherished in the family archives.

It is characteristic of Richard Strauss that his early creations did not fill him with self-admiration. After his compositions had served an emergency purpose, like a family festival, he discarded them carelessly. About a hundred compositions created while he was in his teens were never printed because Strauss himself did not consider them good enough for that. A boy of less talent would easily have become swell-headed by the success of his childhood compositions.

Richard was a docile child, both at home and at school. His father demanded very thorough study of the classics, and Richard followed Mr. Strauss's advice conscientiously.

Richard was early taken to concerts and operas.

Like many of the great musicians, he was first enchanted by Mozart's music.

Richard was a very sociable little fellow, always the lively centre of the gay crowd of cousins, but also very popular with his classmates. On the sport grounds of München, on the skating rink, as a mountain climber, Richard was admired for his skill.

During the summer outings he liked to play the church organ. With equal pleasure did he devote himself to fishing and other outdoor sports.

After some weeks of vacation, however, the boy usually got restless because he missed his comfortable den in the town home of the Strausses which was so well equipped for his musical studies.

Though Richard entered every outdoor game in the best of spirits, and enjoyed them as every child does, the boy was happiest in his own room in the München home. Lounging luxuriously on his couch, his imagination worked at its best, and the comfortable, well-equipped desk permitted him to jot down the musical ideas as soon as they shaped themselves in his mind.

From his earliest boyhood he was able to compose music without the aid of an instrument. Richard was a brilliant pianist and violinist and had also a very pleasing voice. In school, too, he was considered a good pupil, though he did not bother very much with his lessons.

In fact, Richard was always bored with school, and had a special aversion to mathematics. That was a subject that not only bored him, but decidedly irritated the boy. And he might have got into trouble about mathematics if an incident had not helped him to make the hours devoted to this subject tolerable.

Schoolbooks were usually wrapped in a special kind of stiff, blue paper to keep the covers clean. One day Mrs. Strauss did not find any blue paper to wrap up Richard's schoolbooks. Reluctant to risk the cleanness of the covers, Mrs. Strauss wrapped the books in music note paper, of which there was always an abundance at hand.

That day Richard did not mind the mathematics lesson at all. He unwrapped his books and happily spent an hour filling the sheets of music note paper with compositions and musical exercises. The archives of the Strauss family

contain sheets of such paper on which mathematical formulæ alternate with sketches of musical compositions.

After the discovery of that useful wrapping paper, Richard's books were never again wrapped in the conventional blue paper, but always in sheets of music note paper. And while he did a good deal of composing during all kinds of school hours, he invariably spent the whole mathematical hour absorbed in composition.

Thanks to that trick, mathematics had lost their terror for Richard Strauss.

Compositions which he wrote as a child of twelve were published, and he was less than seventeen years old when several of his compositions were performed by great artists in public concerts.

The great American conductor, Theodore Thomas, visited Munich when Richard Strauss was sixteen years old. Papa Strauss took Richard to see Mr. Thomas, and the American musician accepted the manuscript of Richard's first symphony and conducted it during the next season at the Philharmonic concert in New York. Theodore Thomas performed Strauss's second symphony when Richard was nineteen years old.

Family, teachers, press, and public acclaimed the young prodigy and encouraged his work. Richard's happy boyhood was followed by an equally happy manhood.

As a composer of great originality, Strauss, like every genius, at times has to fight against lack of understanding, professional jealousy, and misrepresentation. But he is of such happy disposition that he is always able to fight his adversaries without bitterness. Like all really great people, Richard Strauss has a tremendous sense of humour that always lifts him above petty abuses. He is exceptionally patient with critics who dislike and scorn his new compositions.

"I have every reason to be patient with them," Richard Strauss likes to explain. "Whenever a critic abuses me violently, and calls my music rubbish, I remind myself of the opinion I arrogantly expressed about Richard Wagner when I was a boy.

"In all the biographies and articles written about me you will find quoted violent utterances which I made to my friends about the Wagner operas when I first heard them. I certainly became humble and ashamed of myself when my growing musical intelligence revealed the sublime beauty

of Wagner's compositions to me. When critics abuse my new compositions I tell myself: 'Richard, remember what you thought of another Richard! Wait till their intelligence grows, when they will understand your musical intentions!'"

The tremendous success of his compositions proves Richard Strauss right in this expectation.

One of the giants among composers, Richard Strauss is also one of the greatest orchestra conductors and directors of opera. Beloved and admired by the musical world, happy in his family, Richard Strauss is one of the rare human beings who can look back on a brilliant, sunny past and look forward to a radiant future of further triumphant creations.

He is sixty-five years old and full of creative plans. His father composed pieces for the French horn even when he was eighty-two years old. The world is justified in looking forward to much that Richard Strauss will have to add to the treasure of his compositions.

CHAPTER XV

FEODOR IVANOVITCH CHALIAPINE

If Life Were an Opera

Many stories have been written about people who were born in lowly places, starved through youth, and worked themselves up to leadership among men. But there is hardly any "success story" more fascinating than the story of the great Russian opera singer, Feodor Chaliapine.

He was born in Kasan, in a wretched bare home, where his drunkard of a father made life miserable for the mother and the children. Feodor grew up under extremely hard circumstances. His father spent most of his modest salary on drink, and Feodor knew more of hunger and beatings than of the pleasures decent parents provide for their children.

He was so accustomed to being beaten for everything and for nothing at all that when he wrote the story of his life he dwelt particularly on occasions when he was *not* beaten.

The barefooted, neglected boy did not spend many years in school. From one he was expelled; another he left because he could not stand the

teacher's playful trick called "Pinching a Partridge," which meant a violent pulling of tufts of hair.

An earlier attempt to teach him reading also terminated before he could profit much by it. A general's family lived in the front apartment of the house where the Chaliapines—parents and three children—occupied one miserable back-yard room. The general's wife pitied the little boy and asked her son to teach him to read. Bright little Feodor quickly picked up enough to be able to read. The kind lady wanted to help Feodor and asked him to read aloud to her.

The reading itself went all right. But there was something strange about turning the pages of the book. When Feodor finished the first page he simply did not know which way to turn to get at the next page.

He turned it first one way, then the other, and started to read over again what he had just finished. The lady explained to him how he should do it, but when he finished another page he faced the same difficulty again. He could not manage to turn to the next page. The lady tried hard to show him, and the poor boy tried hard to manage it; but after fingering the book with

great embarrassment, he always arrived back where he had started. This difficulty ended the lessons with the general's family.

But in spite of all the hardships Feodor was a happy child. He spent his time with a bunch of other jolly boys, who created a world of their own.

"We used to turn somersaults," Mr. Chaliapine recalls in his biography, "clambered on roofs and trees, made catapults, and manufactured 'serpents' that floated in the wind. We ran about the kitchen gardens, shook the seeds out of the ripe poppies to eat them, stole turnips and cucumbers, wandered about the threshing floors, up hill and down dale, finding something to interest us everywhere. And everywhere Life showed me her little secrets, teaching me to love and understand living things."

By the time Feodor mastered the art of turning the pages of a book properly he had grown very fond of reading. It became his favourite pastime to imitate the heroes of the stories. He was greatly impressed when he first came across the story of Bova, one of the most popular of Russian stories.

Without a gun or a rifle, armed merely with a

broom, Bova, the hero, manages to defeat and rout an army of a hundred thousand men. Feodor immediately armed himself with his mother's broom and martially attacked a neighbour's chicken in the courtyard, with less disastrous effect upon the attacked chicken than on himself. When the owner of the routed enemy got hold of Feodor the proud conqueror got a hearty thrashing.

In Russia everyone sings, and simple instruments are played in every house. But the piano is not everyone's share. Feodor was about six years old when he first heard a piano. Before he saw the instrument he thought the music came out of a street organ. He stared open-mouthed when he saw that the lovely music was beaten out of a huge wooden box. The landlord's daughter, who beat music out of the teeth of that strange animal, seemed to him a wonder.

Not long after this experience his parents won a dilapidated piano in a raffle. Feodor hungrily approached the instrument but was angrily shooed away from it. The parents meant to sell the piano at a profit. They never let him go near it. One day Feodor fell ill. Formerly a sick Chaliapine child was put on a mattress on the floor

while the healthy children were left in the common bed. This time Feodor's bed was made on the top of the piano, where he was laid up for several days. While lying there, the little boy imagined that this contact with the instrument enabled him to play the piano. During the days of his illness he dreamed of the moment when he would open the instrument and try his skill on it. But he had no chance because the parents sold the piano before he could try himself at it.

Mr. Chaliapine thinks that it was a clown, whom he had seen when he was a small child, who first awakened in him the desire to become an artist. He felt very proud when a choir master, who lived in the same house, accepted him as a choir boy. By and by the little boy with the exquisite voice even earned some money, singing at weddings and funerals.

He gave half of his earnings to his mother, with the rest he bought in secret candy and pastry and tickets for the circus where his favourite clown used to play his pranks.

But he also saved a few kopeks every time he earned something. When he had scraped together a ruble and twenty kopeks he bought a violin. In watching others he managed to teach himself

to play, and soon was engaged in the ambitious attempt to compose a trio. He actually succeeded in writing a piece. To make it more important-looking he wrote it in lilac ink. With two other boys Feodor sang his composition in church during the Easter holidays.

Mr. Chaliapine is not sure what made him more proud about this musical feat, the fact that he and the two other boys who sang the trio with him earned money with it, or the fact that he had written his composition in lilac ink. Mr. Chaliapine strongly suspects that the lovely lilac ink carried more weight in his consideration than the money because beauty meant always more to him than money. On the other hand, money meant also candy—well, it is quite a complicated matter to decide.

Mrs. Chaliapine rejoiced in her son's musical achievements, but his father did not care for these activities. He apprenticed the boy, before he was ten years old, to a shoemaker. Feodor was perfectly satisfied with this turn.

Cruelly hard work and even more cruel beatings were the lot of the child, and he got so little food that he grew thinner from day to day. Mr. Chaliapine remembers that when he was

mere bone and skin he was afraid that even his bones would get thinner.

Next he was apprenticed to a wood carver, who made the child carry loads under which even grown men would have staggered. Then came another turn at another shoemaker. Finally, when he was ten years old, Feodor was sent to school again.

One year later came the event of his life, his first visit to the theatre at an afternoon performance.

To this day Mr. Chaliapine remembers the tremendous impression the first performance made on him. It was so great that from his secret funds he immediately bought a ticket for the evening performance of the same day.

Feodor was in a perfect rapture and walked home in a trance.

On his way he tried to imitate what he had just seen in the theatre. He recited, wildly, "Medea's" line: "I'm a queen, but a woman and a mother!" At that strange exclamation a gentleman who passed his way thought the child must be sick and out of his mind. But Feodor ran away before the gentleman found out. From that time on he frequently asked his father to

let him go to the theatre, but Mr. Chaliapine always refused. He told his son that he should become a yard porter and not a vagabond of an actor.

The boy dreamed of an artist's life and the father grumbled: "Yard porter."

The mother scrubbed floors in other people's houses and washed other people's linen to earn a few kopeks for her wretched family. Under these circumstances Feodor stole his pleasures. It is true, it was his own money Feodor spent for secret theatre visits, he had earned it with his singing, but when he thought of his starved mother he felt a thief. Yet the child could not resist the temptation.

Soon came an event even more impressive than his first visit to the theatre. A touring opera came to the town. Feodor Chaliapine, destined to become one of the greatest opera singers and actors of all time, heard an opera for the first time. The boy was overwhelmed with wonder at the novelty. People on the stage were walking and acting like other people but while ordinary people talked, folks in the opera sang. They sang questions and answers. They ate and drank singing. That was an astounding thing for Feo-

dor. It caught his fancy, and he began to speculate how it would be if people would always sing in ordinary life. He was so charmed by this idea that he wanted to try it.

So when his father called out: "Feodor, bring me some *kvass!*" the little experimenter answered in his childish tenor to an improvised tune. "Yes, Father, I will bring you some at once."

"What's the matter with you?" Mr. Chaliapine asked rudely, but let it go at that without waiting for an explanation.

The next morning, when Mrs. Chaliapine asked Feodor to wake his father for the breakfast, the little rascal sang at the top of his voice: "Papa, get up to drink tea!" Mr. Chaliapine thought his son had gone insane. "Have you ever heard such a crazy thing?" he asked the distressed mother. After the beating he got for the attempt at making life an opera, Feodor had to content himself imagining that people's talks turned into song.

After many vicissitudes, fights for a bare living, and years of strange adventures, Feodor Chaliapine achieved his heart's desire. By the sheer force of his genius he became the foremost bass singer

of the world. His magnificent voice and extraordinary dramatic talent bore him to the forefront of his profession. Music lovers of every rank admire and love him. Ovations make him happy, but they do not spoil him. Gratitude for any favour ever shown him is one of his characteristics. Generosity in helping others and an unbounded sense of humour add to the picture of a lovely human being.

Life is not an opera for all people, as Chaliapine, the child, thought it should be. But his own life has become an opera, a world full of gorgeous melodies.

CHAPTER XVI

WALTER DAMROSCH

A Defeated Cymbalist

When Leopold Damrosch settled with his bride in the Silesian town of Breslau he did not dream that his musical career would transplant him to the New World. There was not much music in Breslau but there was very much of it in the Damrosch home. Leopold Damrosch was an accomplished musician. In addition, he had also a great talent for organizing, an exceedingly valuable gift which his two distinguished sons Walter and Frank have inherited from him along with his talent for music.

Soon after he settled in Breslau Leopold Damrosch organized a symphonic orchestra which started lively musical activities in the town.

Mr. Damrosch remembers to this day many of the greatest musicians of that time who visited their home when they came to perform at the symphonic concerts. He remembers them as musicians, but also in culinary connections.

The name Taussig, for instance, reminds Mr.

Damrosch not only of the person of this great pianist, but also of a particularly delicious apple pie. Mrs. Leopold Damrosch used to bake for Taussig a special kind of pie, which Walter Damrosch describes as a "luscious mixture of apples, raisins, and almonds in a delicate light pie crust." His mouth still waters at the thought of this delicacy.

Another recollection in which music and food play a mixed part is in connection with a visit of Hans von Bülow at the Damrosches'. The celebrated virtuoso once came to dinner and Mrs. Damrosch had personally cooked a hare for the distinguished guest. She was mortified when at the table it turned out that in cooking the hare she had used powdered sugar instead of salt.

The poor woman was ready to die with shame, but her well-bred guest quickly eased her mind. He assured her that sugar always improved roast hare. He followed his words with deeds. He ate all the sweetened hare on his plate and even asked for a second helping to show he meant what he said.

All the great musicians who visited Leopold Damrosch naturally played or sang in the family circle. Walter Damrosch always dwells with

warm gratitude on the wealth of music his parents' home offered the children from early infancy.

But while there was plenty of music, other necessities of life were not so well provided for, and an invitation to America was immediately accepted. Walter was nine years old when his mother and the children followed Leopold Damrosch to the United States.

It was their good fortune to come at a time when the immigrants found virgin soil for their musical endeavours. There was very little music and Theodore Thomas was the only orchestral conductor in the vast country.

Leopold Damrosch initiated, organized, conducted, and worked ceaselessly to broaden musical life in his adopted country. He trained his children, particularly Walter, from their earliest childhood to assist him in the gigantic task. After his father's death Walter stepped into his shoes and devoted himself heart and soul to the musical service of his passionately beloved country.

The New World has completely Americanized the Damrosches, whose name has become a musical household word from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Walter Damrosch's recollections of his

life are a condensed history of America's musical progress during the last decades. His career is full of brilliant achievements, for which he will hold an honoured place in the cultural history of America.

But there were, naturally, also some failures in the course of his happy career. One of these occurred at Walter Damrosch's first public appearance in an orchestra.

Walter was fourteen years old when his father prepared a summer entertainment for the "Arion," the organization that had brought him to America. A charming operetta by Franz Schubert was to be performed. It was at this performance that disaster overtook the ambitious young musician.

"In this Schubert operetta," Mr. Damrosch likes to tell gleefully, "occurs a delightful march of the Crusaders with one loud crash of the cymbals at the climax. It did not seem worth while to engage a musician for this one clash and I was, therefore, intrusted with it. At rehearsals I counted my bars and rests and watched for my cue with such perfection that the cymbals resounded with great success at the proper time and in the proper manner. But at the perform-

ance, alas, a great nervousness fell upon me, and as the march proceeded and came nearer and nearer at the crucial moment my hands seemed paralyzed, and when my father's flashing eye indicated to me that the moment had come, I simply could not lift the cymbals. They suddenly weighed like a hundred tons.

"The march went on, but I felt that the entire evening had been ruined by me, and that everyone in the audience must know that I had 'funked it.' As soon as I could I slipped out of the orchestra pit underneath the stage and into the dark night. I felt that life had no joy left for me." Mr. Damrosch, looking back on his career, adds to this story:

"My failure was unmistakable, but fortunately my conclusion was wrong. Life did leave much joy and great happiness for me."

CHAPTER XVII

COUNT GÉZA ZICHY

A Meal of Flies

It has been said of Raphael, the great Italian master, that he would have been a great painter even if he had been born without arms. The Hungarian count, Géza Zichy, a remarkable phenomenon among pianists, was destined to prove that a man can be a virtuoso on the piano even if he has only one arm.

Count Zichy was born a normal child as far as the possession of two arms and other limbs went. To the great distress of his family, however, he appeared abnormal because he could not speak though he had long passed the age when other children chatter gaily.

Géza was three years old when one day he sat in the lap of his mother at a window watching trains roll by toward the station. At once the "mute" boy exclaimed: "The train is whistling!" And to the unspeakable joy of his mother Géza began to speak like any normal child.

Count Zichy used to consider this incident significant for his whole life. He used to point

out that trains played an important part in his life as a virtuoso who travelled several times over half the globe on his *tournées*. "The whistle of a locomotive always seems to me one of the most pleasant of songs," Count Zichy liked to say.

At the age when he started to speak he began also to fumble with the piano. He hardly reached the keys, yet he persistently tried to pick out melodies and soon also succeeded in doing so. His mother was very musical and was naturally overjoyed when she heard the little man play a well-known melody with one finger.

At the age of five Géza Zichy had already managed to form chords of his own and took possession of the piano as often as he possibly could. He had many a fight with his brother Ernst, who did not relish Géza's musical attempts and always tried to shove him away from the instrument.

The piano teacher who was in charge of the older boys of the family was now asked to start teaching Géza, too. While the other boys had made very little progress, Géza quickly learned to play pieces, without, however, knowing how to read music.

Count Zichy liked to relate in later life how

cunningly he swindled the teacher, pretending to play from the music in front of him. He had observed at what point of a piece the page was to be turned and managed to camouflage his utter ignorance in reading music by turning the pages at the proper place. "Thanks to my good memory, I simply imitated my teacher's playing like a parrot," the count used to relate laughingly.

Géza Zichy was an unusually quiet, timid, and sensitive child, irritating to his brothers of wild and impatient temperament. They did their best to lash him into fits of temper. They caused him much mental anguish without succeeding in their aim. Géza was very obedient to his parents and teachers, and therefore hardly ever punished.

One day the rare event happened. Géza was to be punished by his mother. Not to be too severe on him, the good lady ordered that Géza was not to have his afternoon coffee, the famous little meal between noonday dinner and supper. Though he had had a hearty dinner, and was to have in the evening his ordinary supper, the sensitive child fell into a fit of melancholy at the prospect of going without his afternoon coffee.

In this gloomy state he felt that the lack of the accustomed little meal in the afternoon would kill him. As the minutes passed after the verdict had been pronounced, Géza felt more and more alarmed. He felt sure he was to starve to death. In this mournful state he sat at a window and watched the flies buzzing over the panes. A saving idea struck him. He began to catch flies and —ate them.

Thirty-two flies he ate to stave off death by starvation. His mother nearly fainted when she came upon the child devouring flies. There was much ado and a very big dose of castor oil. For the benefit of mankind, in general ignorant of the taste of flies, Count Zichy noted down that flies have a lemon flavour.

The strange sensitiveness that made little Géza fear death of starvation if deprived of a between-meal had once a deeply significant expression.

Géza Zichy was ten years old when he once witnessed how a young man, wounded by an accident, was brought home on the stretcher accompanied by the lament of peasant women. The young man's right arm was shattered, and Géza heard that the arm was to be amputated.

The child began to tremble, and in a fit of

despair sobbed, "Mother, that's going to be my fate! I feel it—I feel it." The poor countess could hardly quiet the child. She repeated over and over again, "Don't be silly, sonny! There is nothing to it. You are excited about the poor lad because you have never seen a wounded person. Nothing of that sort is going to happen to you!"

Four years later Géza Zichy's right arm had to be amputated after he had shot himself accidentally.

Now the musical Raphael with one arm was born.

After a time of abject dejection Count Géza sat down to train his left hand to do the work of two hands. He swore to himself that he would commit suicide if he could not succeed within one year in doing with one hand everything people with two hands are able to do.

The timid boy turned into a determined, energetic lad. He went at his self-imposed task with unparalleled persistence, and did succeed indeed. He not only put himself to perform everything average people do with their hands, but he succeeded in becoming one of the most brilliant piano virtuosos of his time.

His teacher and friend, the great Franz Liszt, was so impressed by Zichy's art that he composed special pieces for the left hand for him.

When people discussed with Zichy the miraculous development of his left hand, he used to tell them an incident of his early childhood. His father once asked the piano teacher whether Géza made better progress than the older boys. The teacher replied: "His right hand does pretty well but the left hand will never be anything."

"The man had damned my left hand," Count Zichy would say, "yet you see, where there is a will, there is a way."

CHAPTER XVIII

RICHARD WAGNER

His Most Heroic Deed

Some great musicians were so fortunate throughout life that it seemed as if fairies had showered them with their good gifts and only an occasional bad fairy had thrown her mischievous gift into the basket of their life. With Richard Wagner it seemed the other way. The greater part of his life seemed cursed by ill fate, and he was over fifty years old when a turn in his life seemed to have been brought about by a good fairy.

Richard Wagner was born in Leipzig, as the youngest of nine children, four boys and five girls. His father died half a year after the boy's birth. Two years later his mother remarried and the family moved to live in Dresden.

The stepfather, a famous actor, also a portrait painter and playwright, was very kind to his stepchildren and devoted himself to their education as if they were his own.

Richard gave the family very much trouble. He was so frail and sickly a child that until his tenth year he could not be sent to public school.

This was rather hard on the family, because he was a very self-willed and unmanageable child. Anxious to make him physically fit, his parents did not press learning upon him.

Richard showed no special talent or interest for anything in particular. His stepfather tried to teach him drawing to give the child an interest in creating something, but he failed in that attempt.

From earliest infancy Richard Wagner grew up in a theatrical atmosphere. His father was famous as an amateur actor, and member of a theatrical group that often played also in public. Mr. Geyer, Richard's stepfather, was a court actor at the Royal Theatre. The eldest brother and three of the sisters became actors and singers.

There was a good deal of music in the home. Two of Richard's sisters, Ottilie and Clara, played the piano and sang, particularly Clara. She was not only an excellent piano player but also had a beautiful voice. Great musicians of that time were for her sake frequent guests of the family.

Two of the musical friends of the house made an extraordinary impression on Richard. One of

them, the famous Italian tenor, Sassaroli, horrified the little boy, while he adored the other, the great German composer, Carl Maria von Weber. Sassaroli was a huge, loud, and rapid-talking man, whose explosive guffaws threw Richard into fits. The lame, frail German composer, with the noble, suffering features, appealed to the romantic child. Because of the horrible impression Sassaroli made on him, Richard conceived a violent dislike for Italian speech and singing.

But all the music and musical discussion heard during his earliest years did not awaken Richard Wagner's musical instincts. He played a few tunes perfunctorily on the piano without any ambition to do better.

His idol, Carl Maria von Weber, asked Richard when he was nine years old whether he did not want to become a musician. His mother replied for him that Richard showed no musical talent whatsoever, though he was extraordinarily fond of Weber's opera *Der Freischütz*. Richard admitted that he did not care to become a musician.

Weber's *Freischütz* remained for years Wagner's favourite, which he never tired of hearing, though it did not inspire him to study music.

All his brothers and sisters had music lessons, only Richard was not taught to play an instrument, or to sing.

Richard was eight years old when his loving and beloved stepfather died. At the age of ten he was first sent to school. Soon afterward he showed great interest in poetry. A touching poem he wrote at the age of eleven on the occasion of a classmate's death was even published. At that time Richard declared that he wanted to become a poet and hurled himself into reading poetry. He studied Latin, Greek, and English to be able to read the classics and Shakespeare in the original.

Like most boys of his age, Richard also set out to write a great tragedy. And great it was, indeed!

The tragedy he wrote contained enough persons to populate a little village. And so savage was Richard's bent that he murdered one after the other of his characters in the play. In his bloodthirsty course he did away with fully forty-two persons. And Richard only stopped murdering because he had killed every single person appearing in his great tragedy.

The result of this wholesale slaughter was very

embarrassing to the youthful author because the story was not finished. The problem was how to go on with the play without a single person left alive in it.

Richard's imagination, however, overcame this obstacle. All the murdered persons of his play simply reappeared in the third act as ghosts and thus permitted him to finish the tragedy to his heart's content.

Once in later years one of Wagner's classmates who remembered Richard's gruesome tragedy jokingly called him a great hero because he had killed forty-two people single-handed. Wagner protested, saying:

"Oh, no! This was not my most heroic deed. I did once something that was far more heroic than the butchering of all the people in my tragedy." And to his friend's great delight, the master told of an incident that happened when Wagner was fourteen years old.

At that time his sister Rosalie was engaged at the theatre in Prague and his mother had moved with the other children to that city, leaving Richard in school in Dresden. His mother fetched him during the winter for a visit, which he greatly enjoyed. Next spring Richard decided to visit his

family again. Without money for the fare, the boy started with a classmate to walk from Dresden to Prague. Long before they reached the first evening's destination, Teplitz, their feet were blistered and swollen and so were their sunburned faces. Next morning they had to spend their meagre capital to proceed on a coach, as their aching feet would not carry them.

"But the coach put us down midway," Richard Wagner told. "The driver said he could not take us farther for the little money we had paid him. The sun shone mercilessly down on us battered, thirsty, and hungry fellows. Penniless as we were, there was nothing left but to drag ourselves on. In the strange country we lost our way and wandered around until evening, when we at last found our way back to the main road."

Richard Wagner stopped in smiling reminiscence, and after a while continued:

"I have never known anything like the fatigue and hunger at the end of that day. While we were discussing what to do, an elegant coach appeared far down on the road."

"'Let's pretend to be wandering artisans,' I suggested to my friend, 'and beg some money from the travellers!'

"My friend threw up his hands and declared he could not do it even if he were to die on the spot. But I was not ready to die and screwed up all my courage to do the begging.

"My gentle friend hid in the ditch and I stepped out boldly on the roadway and stopped the elegant coach. In great confusion I stammered something incoherently. The travellers could not have understood what I mumbled, but as I had my cap respectfully in the hand it was evident that I was begging.

"The travellers threw a silver coin into my cap and drove off."

Wagner sighed even at the recollection when he continued his story:

"Well, when my timid friend crept up out of the ditch I felt a hero with the conquered coin. A perfect hero, for having had the courage to beg and thus save our lives."

Richard Wagner laughed heartily before he finished the story: "You see, we were so wildly hungry and so tired and so sore all over the body, and so blistered and sunburned, that it seemed we must die if we could not get shelter and food.

"But imagine our disappointment when it turned out that the coin would provide only for

either shelter or food. I reproached my friend for having hidden while I accomplished the heroic deed of begging.

"'If the travellers had seen you they certainly would have thrown double the sum into my cap, and we could eat supper and also sleep under a roof,' I said to him. After a lengthy debate what to choose, food or shelter, we decided to eat and then to sleep in the open air in the fields.

"We dragged ourselves into the next inn on the road and fell on the food like starved wolves." Wagner's friend laughed about the story, but its hero continued: "Since then I have dined and wined with kings and grand people and have tasted the best the culinary art can produce, but I certainly have never enjoyed a meal as I enjoyed that on the road to Prague."

Throughout all his boyhood there was not the slightest indication that Richard Wagner was to become a musician. He was fifteen years old when he first heard Beethoven Symphonies played at the famous *Gewandhaus* concerts in Leipzig. This musical experience acted like magic. A passionate desire to become a musician welled up in the boy like a spring bursting forth from a rock.

Weber's music, which Richard Wagner loved and admired, had always given him pleasure but it had not touched his creative instincts. It was Beethoven's genius that achieved this.

At the age of seventeen Wagner's first composition, an overture for orchestra, was performed publicly. It was a great failure, deservedly so because it had no musical merits whatsoever. Several more inferior compositions followed before he created music that made him one of the greatest composers of all time.

Decades of bitterest struggle for recognition passed before a royal word lifted him out of the deepest despair into the realm of fairy dreams.

Richard Wagner had searched many countries for a public that would listen to him. He had the hardest struggle for recognition a musical genius ever experienced. He had to make the most of living by the most humble work, and he and his wife were often practically starving.

Wagner's difficulties were aggravated by the fact that in the democratic passion of the year 1849 he took the side of those patriots who wanted to liberate the German people from feudal oppression and desired to turn the monarchy into a republic.

For thirteen years he was in exile, forbidden to reënter his passionately beloved fatherland. And he had no musical success to lighten the burden of his exile.

Opera managers returned his scores unopened. Publishers refused to take *Tannhäuser* even for nothing. Influential music patrons refused to see him. A man of less stamina would have broken down under such indifference, and, though he was not only extremely poor but also frequently sick, Wagner stuck to his mission to create a new form of music, the music drama.

Richard Wagner was past fifty years of age when he seemed to give up the hope of making a success of his life. At that time he published his poem, "Der Ring des Nibelungen," with an introduction that sounded like a good-bye to all hopes.

In this introduction he spoke with deep emotion of his inability to find leisure to complete his life work, the Ring, and finished, saying: "I have given up all hope that I shall live to have the Ring performed." A young monarch, a great lover of all arts, happened to come across Richard Wagner's poem with its tragic introduction.

The youthful King of Bavaria was so deeply

impressed by the poem and the introduction that he offered Wagner the means to devote himself free of all material cares to the creation of music.

Such things happen frequently in fairy tales but seldom in real life. After the lift from the most desperate, hopeless condition Wagner lived two decades of brilliant success and supreme happiness.

A prince of royal blood, King Louis of Bavaria, lifted the burden of financial worries from Wagner's shoulders, and a prince in the realm of music, Franz Liszt, devoted his life to win the world to acknowledge Richard Wagner's genius.

Though nothing could erase the wounds a cruel world inflicted upon him for half a century by its indifference, the long years of appreciation and fame and the fulfilment of all his artistic dreams made him the happiest of mortals. His gigantic work stands out among the greatest musical creations.

CHAPTER XIX

PETER ILICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Music on the Windowpane

When in the year 1891 the Music Hall Company of New York prepared to inaugurate its palace of music, the Carnegie Hall in New York, it invited the greatest Russian composer to conduct some of his compositions at that solemn occasion. This invitation brought Tchaikovsky to this country. The personal contact with him endeared the man to the public of the New World, which had long loved him as the author of many compositions frequently played on American concert stages.

Tchaikovsky's musical career is one of the strangest ever known. The composer of many operas and other vocal and instrumental compositions that have elated the music lovers of the world grew into full maturity without any evidence of musical abilities or expression of a desire to devote himself to music.

It is strange to contemplate that this great composer came from a family in which for generations there was not a single member who had

any musical talent. The Tchaikovsky family even did not care as much for music as a pleasant pastime as people in general usually do.

Born in a little abandoned mining town, Wotkinsk, near the border of Asia, where his father was government inspector of mines, Peter Ilich grew up in a community that even had no public school. He was hardly four years old when his parents employed a governess for his older brother and a cousin who lived with them. Little Peter felt so lonely when his playmates deserted him for their school hours that he implored his parents to permit him to join the class.

Being rather indifferent toward the child, the parents didn't care one way or the other, and Peter began to attend the lessons. In spite of his tender age, he soon caught up with the older children, and progressed with them at their pace. This, however, did not mean that little Peter was in any way a precocious child. He grew up without ever being a particularly bright scholar, did not show any extraordinary talent in any direction, and was rather indifferent to music.

While his older brother was a fastidious, orderly fellow, Peter had a distinct dislike for clean-

liness and order. His garments were always unusually disorderly. He hated being washed or bathed, and often exclaimed: "What's the use? One always gets dirty again!" To comb his hair seemed to him a foolish waste of energy. Buttons he considered more useful as playthings than necessary as means to fasten garments.

Though without particular distinction, the little boy became the favourite of his teacher because he was different and had an undescribable charm that captivated her motherly heart.

If he showed any talent during childhood, it was for writing poetry. Several French and Russian poems—not all too good ones—exist which he wrote when he was seven years old. The remarkable thing at that time was his mastery of two foreign languages, French and German, which the Alsatian governess had taught him.

There was no orchestra, no choir, in the little half-Asiatic town. The piano in the Tchaikovsky home was rarely opened. Mrs. Tchaikovsky never played for music's sake, only occasionally, for a dance, and the governess did not know music at all.

An orchestrion—a kind of music box—that

Mr. Tchaikovsky had once brought from St. Petersburg was the only "instrument" Peter Ilich had a chance to hear.

Though he gave no sign of more interest in music than other normal children exhibit when they occasionally tinkle on the keys of a piano, which Peter also used to do, there were some moments in his childhood when a keen observer might have guessed at something unusual slumbering in the child.

When he first heard the orchestrion play an aria from the opera *Don Giovanni*, little Peter wanted it repeated over and over again. All his life Tchaikovsky loved Mozart above all other composers because he remembered how happy it had made him when he first heard his *Don Giovanni* aria.

On one of the rare occasions when some music was played at a party at the Tchaikovskys' the children were permitted to stay up. Little Peter listened intently and seemed very happy. But in the midst of the party he left the parlour and went to bed. When the party was over the governess went to his room to see whether everything was in order for the night. To her great alarm she found Peter softly crying. When she asked

what the matter was the child pointed to his head and sobbed: "Oh, this music, this music! Save me from it! It's here, here, and will not stop!"

He was a sensitive, nervous child. Neither parents nor governess ever dared to punish him, though they often thought he deserved it.

Peter was eight years old when the family moved to St. Petersburg. Here the world of music was opened to Peter. But even frequent visits to the famous Imperial Opera, concerts, and serious music lessons did not bring out any active response from Peter. He enjoyed the music, that was all. There was not the slightest indication, even then, that a great musician, the greatest composer of his passionately beloved country, was slumbering in the child.

Long school hours, hard home work, and frequent illness changed Peter's gay disposition. He became irritable and moody, unpleasant in his manners. The family physician realized that the change in the boy's disposition, his growing laziness and indifference, were due to his poor health, and ordered a long and perfect rest.

During this period of rest the family moved away from grand and gay St. Petersburg to a wretched little town which was even worse

than his miserable little birthplace Wotkinsk. The parents soon realized that this was no place to bring up the boys and took them back to St. Petersburg. Peter was enrolled at the school which prepared its pupils for the law school. The law school, in its turn, prepared its students for a career in the civil service.

The St. Petersburg law school also had music in its curriculum. Every student had either to join the school chorus or the orchestra of the institute. Peter went through school with very little glory. He hardly managed to pass the examinations and distinguished himself only in utterly unpleasant ways. His mind was more and more set on pleasures and nothing else.

Though terribly shaken by the death of his mother when he was fourteen years old, even that loss did not turn Peter into more serious ways.

At the age of twenty Tchaikovsky entered, without any resentment, the civil service in the Ministry of Justice, still unaware that he was destined to create music that would earn world fame for him. During the next years he developed interest enough in music to take serious

lessons, not with a view to a musical career, merely as a fad, a pleasant pastime.

Peter Ilich Tchaikovksy was twenty-two years old when an incident happened in his civil service career that must seem to us like fate. It turned him away from the sordid career and pushed him onto the path which lifted him above the mass of ordinary men.

A vacancy occurred in his office to which he had a claim. The post would have meant advancement in his career, and according to rules it was due him. Tchaikovsky, the civil servant, was unjustly passed over in favour of a colleague whose powerful relations had "pulled wires" for him.

That injustice was the turning point in Tchaikovsky's life. He was still far from realizing his great musical gift, but he began to contemplate a musical career.

"I have come to the conclusion," he wrote at that time to his sister, "that sooner or later I shall resign my office and become a musician. Do not imagine I dream of being a great artist. I only feel I must do the work for which I have a vocation. Whether I become a celebrated com-

poser or only a struggling teacher is all the same to me. Of course I shall not resign my present position until I am sure that I am no longer a clerk, but a musician."

A few months later Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky turned his back on the Russian civil service and became the servant of the whole civilized world, giving it some of the most exquisite music created in the Nineteenth Century.

When the incredible fact that during his early youth he had not shown any musical inclination was once discussed in a circle of friends, Tchaikovsky exclaimed:

"Why, you are all wrong! I did show musical ability at an early age!" Seeing a twinkle in the composer's eye, his friends urged him to tell the story, thinking that he was going to make some joke. But Tchaikovsky grew quite serious.

"Really, there was music stirring in me very early," he told them. "It was my sense of rhythm. I remember distinctly, as a baby it gave me pleasure to drum rhythmically on tables and windowpanes. And I annoyed the household a great deal with this habit of belabouring desks and tables and panes. They did not recognize the melodies I drummed out, for them I merely

made noise. But I enjoyed the practice. One day, however, I drummed so energetically on a windowpane that I broke the glass and cut my hand severely. That ended my drumming activities. And as those were my only musical manifestations, I must say that ended my pleasure and interest in music for many, many years."

CHAPTER XX

GEORG FRIEDRICH HANDEL

A Surprise for the Orchestra

Attics have always played a great rôle in the life of musicians, artists, and poets. There was a traditional belief that poverty, misery, and privation were the greatest help for the creation of true works of art—a mistaken idea that unfortunately has not yet died out.

Literature is full of stories of famished and freezing musicians and poets lying on rag-covered cots in icy attics. Often a faithful dog licking the hand of his suffering master completes the tearful picture. And so strong was the belief that attics and misery were the fertile soil for great works of art, that a musician or a poet with a comfortable and well-appointed home was suspected of lacking real genius.

Among the multitudes of attics immortalized in the stories of great musicians, painters, and poets, there is, however, one attic of a different type.

It is the attic where little Georg Friedrich Handel defied his father, practising the clavi-

chord smuggled up for the little rascal who annoyed the old man with his musical endeavours.

When Handel was born his father was an old man, over sixty-three years old. And the old man was somewhat of a snob. As a son and brother of master coppersmiths, Georg Friedrich's father considered himself socially above his family when he succeeded in the profession of a barber-surgeon. His ambition was to have his children rise further in the social scale. For Georg Friedrich, the late born, he planned the career of a lawyer.

But the child had from the earliest age a decided inclination and unmistakable gift for music. There were people who insisted that even in the cradle he made noises unlike other baby noises, musical noises.

Georg Friedrich reacted to music as other children react to candy. They could bribe him, reward him, drive him, get anything from the child through music. The crude musical toys of the Christmas table yielded real music to the little genius. By and by he experimented with those noisy toys as a future technical genius experiments with his mechanical playthings.

Georg Friedrich's father was annoyed with his

son. So far that he once ferociously exclaimed: "If that boy ever shows the first inclination toward music or noises disguised as such, I will kill him!" Father Handel grew alarmed when the child, so bright and clever in many ways, concentrated on music as if it were the breath of his life.

Old Handel, in his stubborn will to divert his son from his preoccupation, sternly forbade anything that might encourage George Friedrich in his musical madness. He even did not send him to a public school because music, too, was taught there. He stopped the child's friendship with boys in whose houses he might hear music. He kept him strictly from contamination with music. No musical toys were tolerated any more in the house, and yet genius had its way.

As strong as the father's resistance, so strong was the son's determination. History has not recorded to whom we owe the help given to the child when a clavichord—that flat, stringed box with piano keys—was smuggled into the corner of the attic. But whoever it was—the mother, young enough to understand her child better than his old father, or an aunt or a friend of the house—whoever it was deserves our eter-

nal gratitude. In the attic the child could finger that noiselessly tinkling instrument to his heart's desire. The sounds did not reach his father's quarters. When the family retired the child stole up to his adored instrument and picked out on it harmonic combinations. By the time he was seven years old Georg Friedrich knew how to play the clavichord without anyone having taught him.

It was at that age that his father was staggered by the discovery of his son's artistic development. Old Handel went to a neighbouring town to visit a son of his first marriage, whom Georg Friedrich had never seen. The little musician begged his father to be taken on this visit, but the old man declined the request. The child, however, had inherited his father's strong will and was determined to travel with him, if not on wheels in the coach, then on foot running behind the coach. After a while the father detected the panting child, and relenting took him to visit the unknown older brother who was a valet of the reigning Duke of Saxe-Weisenfelds.

This visit was destined to remove the obstacles in the path of Georg Friedrich's musical career. The visitors—father and son—had joined the

ducal household in the service at chapel. After service, Georg Friedrich could not resist a temptation to steal to the organ and to try on it what he used to play on his beloved clavichord in the attic. The child of seven played, and played so remarkably that the duke inquired who was at the organ.

This inquiry brought out the secret of his musical self-training in the attic that had enabled him to play the organ the very first time he sat before its keys. When the duke heard of Mr. Handel's unreasonable attitude toward music and musicians he talked severely to him. He told the father in unmistakable language that it was an unforgivable crime to stifle his son's genius. The duke lauded music and musicians to the great astonishment of the old snob. And just because he was a snob, and because he had the ambition for his son's social elevation, the duke's admonition and reproof had a happy effect. If a duke had such respect for music there must be something in it after all, the old man decided. He promised to provide a musical education for Georg Friedrich, and kept his word.

On returning to Halle, their home, serious and

severe studies began under the best possible guidance, and there was no happier child than Georg Friedrich, who had conquered at the age of seven by perseverance and indomitable will. He learned not only to play the harpsichord, the violin, the hautboy, his favourite instrument, and other instruments, but also the theoretical science of music.

He composed innumerable pieces and was at the age of sixteen acknowledged a "man of importance" in the musical world, a recognized authority on whom far older musicians leaned. The homage paid him by fellow musicians, royal personages, and others never turned the head of this "giant among composers," as one of his biographers called him. When, in his later life, a group of six sonatas for two hautboys with thorough-bass and harpsichord which he had composed at the age of ten were praised, Handel laughingly remarked: "I used to write music like the devil in those days, but chiefly for the hautboy, which was my favourite instrument."

The happy youngster was blessed with a great sense of humour and liked to play a practical joke. One of these he always remem-

bered with great glee, and he liked to tell the story of how he fooled the Theatre Orchestra in Hamburg.

Handel's fame as a virtuoso was already well established in his part of the country and in Berlin where he had played at Court, but his reputation had not reached Hamburg, the rich commercial city. Handel wanted to go to Italy. To earn the money necessary for this journey he looked for a position in Hamburg, which had a famous opera. The opera orchestra offered him a minor post to play one of the unimportant instruments. Realizing that those employing him were not aware of his identity, he modestly refrained from disclosing his accomplishments and accepted the ridiculous position, confident of a chance for a more congenial task.

He played the *violon di ripieno* and prepared the ground for a later surprise by acting "as if he did not know how to count five." His opportunity came soon. The harpsichordist of the opera orchestra fell ill and there was nobody to take his place. Several members of the orchestra were tried and desperately given up as unfit to fill the vacancy. Handel, too, was asked to try himself at the harpsichord. He acted as if he were

unwilling to try, but at last sat down—and gave the orchestra the surprise of its life. The simpleton of the *violon di ripieno* played on the harpsichord as none of them had ever heard it played before.

Out of the happy childhood of Georg Friedrich Handel grew one of the most remarkable of musical careers. The colossal work of this musical genius is part of the granite foundation of modern music.

CHAPTER XXI

FELIX WEINGARTNER

An Opera in Green

Felix Weingartner's first musical performance was not exactly a success. All he achieved with it was that the piano in the Weingartner salon was locked carefully against his musical attempts. It is true the performance was more ambitious than artistic. He was a baby of two or three years when his horrified mother dragged him away from the piano which he was pounding with all the might of his baby fists.

After that the piano was unlocked only when Mrs. Weingartner wanted to play. Fortunately, she played often, alone or in duets with guests, to little Felix's great delight. There was, however, always trouble when the baby was sent to bed while music was being played in the house. He had to be dragged away and often spoiled the harmony, yelling at the top of his voice in his effort to be left near the music.

One day a friend of the family played the violin to Mrs. Weingartner's accompaniment. When they finished four-year-old Felix began to sing

the violin part, and sang the whole piece without a single mistake. The musicians in the party were overwhelmed with surprise and amazed at the extraordinary feat. The baby had to repeat it over and over again.

After that his musical endeavours were treated more respectfully. The piano was left unlocked, and when he was four years old his mother even began to teach him to play the piano. The death of his father and Mrs. Weingartner's moving from Felix's birthplace, Zara, to Gratz interrupted these studies.

Felix was six years old when his mother resumed the piano lessons, and soon afterward the little boy felt he was now ready to compose pieces.

One day he brought his mother a sheet of paper covered with a maze of thick and thin lines zigzagging in all directions. He proudly asked her to play his "composition." Felix didn't think much of his mother's abilities when she declared she couldn't play his piece. But he was a sensible little fellow and readily learned to write music when his mother explained to him that this was necessary if he wanted to have people read his compositions.

Mr. Weingartner is a conductor who is particularly famous for his keen sense of rhythm. In view of that, it is amusing to hear him tell how his mother used to complain about his lack of rhythm. Mrs. Weingartner was herself a good musician. She was a patient mother and teacher, yet in the point of rhythm she was quite unreasonable. She nagged the boy until she drove him into despair. She demanded that Felix count loud while he played, and if he did not do it himself she counted loud and energetically for him, irritating him beyond words.

One day she again had nagged him to "count loud," and when he failed to obey she exasperated him by counting herself loud and quite near to his ear. Felix could not stand that. He jumped up from the piano and begged his mother to stop the piano lessons altogether.

Mr. Weingartner likes gratefully to acknowledge that his mother was a wise woman when she disregarded this request. But he remembers that for a long while she had to drag him to the piano to make him continue his studies.

Another musical form for which he had not much taste at that time was grand opera. His mother had taken him for the first time to the

opera one evening when he was on the verge of a serious illness that broke out the following morning. Neither Felix nor his mother realized that his dislike for opera after that first occasion was due to the fact that the boy was already ill during the performance. When Mrs. Weingartner proposed to take him again to the opera Felix implored her to let him stay at home.

"I would rather read Cinderella than listen to the opera, Mother," Felix said. But Mrs. Weingartner insisted that he should go with her for the sake of his musical education.

This time the opera had a very different effect on Felix. The performance of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* made an overwhelming impression on the boy and that evening he determined to become a musician.

Endless discussions with his mother followed. Good Mrs. Weingartner had always taken it for granted that her Felix would become a government official like his father and his forefathers. Music was merely to be part of his cultural education. She explained to her son that when he grew up he had to earn his living and therefore could not become a musician.

Felix was about seven years old when on his

insistent appeal Mrs. Weingartner took him to the opera to hear *Don Giovanni* a second time. At this occasion the boy noticed a funny little man in the orchestra who stood in front of a huge book and made funny gestures with a little stick.

On their way home he asked his mother what the funny man was doing in the orchestra. She explained that he was the conductor leading the performance.

"And does he make all those funny movements for nothing?" Felix asked his mother.

"Oh, no, he is paid a salary for that," she answered.

"Well," burst out Felix, "then I can become a conductor and get a salary."

Mrs. Weingartner recognized the logic of her son's answer, yet told him severely to drop the idea.

Her advice didn't go deep with Felix. Next morning he spent considerable time trying to imitate the conductor's movements, using his ruler as a baton.

Mrs. Weingartner continued to see in her son the future government official, but Felix knew he would never be anything but a musician. Some time later he heard Gounod's *Faust* in the

opera. The boy was again transported into ecstasy.

Shortly afterward he started to compose an opera, and enchanted with the music of *Don Giovanni* and *Faust* he decided to compose something in which both characters should appear together. In great secrecy he set to work on the book of his opera.

Mr. Weingartner likes to remember the childish zeal with which he worked on the book. To make it the more startling he wrote the opera in green ink. To this day Mr. Weingartner will occasionally muse upon why he thought that an opera containing both *Don Giovanni* and *Faust* would be even more attractive if written with green ink.

Felix was less than ten years old when Mrs. Weingartner realized that she must yield to her son's desire to become a musician. She procured the best possible musical education for him and thus gave the world one of the most distinguished conductors of our age. As composer Felix Weingartner has also contributed to the musical wealth of our time.

CHAPTER XXII

ETHEL SMYTH

A Peeress in Her Own Right

Friends of the family called her a tomboy. The governesses wrung their hands at "the most unmanageable pupil" they ever had. And the parents could not understand how they got a child "like that."

She was a tomboy indeed and unmanageable and "like that"—but Ethel Smyth was also something else. She was a poetic soul and a born musician, though it took people a long while to recognize her talent. They could easily have found out the musician in the child if they had looked for it, if they had encouraged her to express herself freely. But she was a girl, and in her youth the children of her sex were not expected to have such outlandish gifts.

A little pretty singing, a little tinkling on the piano, that was all a well-bred English girl was expected to do in the line of music. Ethel's talent and inclination did not fit such narrow and inartistic limitations.

Being a girl was a tremendous handicap at

that time. To become a musician Ethel Smyth—be sure to pronounce it to rhyme with scythe if you don't want to call down the wrath of the temperamental musician—had to conquer also another obstacle. She grew up in the midst of a numerous family headed by a father who had no patience with art. Musical talent ran in her mother's family but her father, a general in the British Army and later a country gentleman, had no sympathy for this inheritance.

Ethel was hardly more than a baby when she began to sing correct seconds to her sister Mary's songs and also accompanied their duets as only a child of unusual gifts could have done. She transposed and played by ear long before she had any music lessons. But these little musical manifestations were lost in the noisy active life of the child, the stormy petrel of the family.

Outspoken to an extent that often embarrassed her family and governesses, Ethel would refuse to behave "like a little lady." While her five sisters enjoyed dainty dresses, Ethel merely felt the nuisance of having to be careful in them.

Dolls were a perfect abomination to her and also to one of her many sisters. The two girls

invented games that permitted them to ignore the dolls. Ethel and Mary inflicted long, infectious diseases on their dolls. When their mother or a governess would advise them to play with dolls Ethel would say: "Why, we must not go near our dolls, they have infected throats and we may catch it from them."

Those poor dolls were kept tucked away for long spells of sickness. Their diseases had always to be infectious to excuse Ethel and Mary from playing with them. No other dolls ever survived such a series of chicken pox, measles, diphtheria, and other ailments.

As much as Ethel hated to play with dolls, so much did she like outdoor games. To drive her donkey cart or to ride on a black donkey to the near-by village, to jump and run, to climb trees and race with her brothers and boy friends, these were her real pleasures—besides music. And how she liked to eat! Ladylike little girls in Ethel's youth were not supposed to be really hungry or to care for substantial food. But Ethel cared more for her stomach than for the rules of gentility. One of Ethel Smyth's fondest childhood memories is an incident with her favourite dessert. Pudding was served but Ethel sat back

in her chair and did not touch it. Her astonished grandmother asked what the matter was.

"Are you not well?" the old lady asked anxiously, "I thought this was your favourite pudding."

"Yes, it is," said Ethel with great dignity. "But this is so little, I can't eat it."

For a different reason did she refuse to eat horse-radish. Her father had a horse which had white saddle marks on his withers. As a tiny baby Ethel figured that horse-radish was plucked from the horse's withers. For many years—even after she knew better—Ethel refused to eat the horse-radish sauce frequently served with the Sunday roast.

However exasperating the little girl was to the grown-ups in the family, they also tortured her. Their lack of understanding of the finest things in her very often made Ethel miserable and unhappy.

She had begun early to compose songs and hymns, but her musical efforts did not interest anyone in the family. And no one realized how keenly she suffered when people sang out of pitch or played wrongly.

One day she worked at her arithmetic lesson

while one of her sisters practised on the piano with great disregard for the music in front of her. Ethel's nerves bristled at the wrong playing. Irritated beyond endurance, she exclaimed: "I can't do this sum if you go on playing G natural. It's G sharp."

Her sister, unmoved by the torture she caused to the musical little girl, continued to play wrongly and merely said: "I prefer to play G natural!"

And so little did the governess know about music that she scolded Ethel instead of correcting the piano-playing pupil. Ethel realized that music meant to her more than to anyone around her. The poor child felt very lonely. But nobody was aware of that loneliness because outwardly she was a child of violent, noisy activities. Always in a rumpus with the grown-ups, they merely saw a particularly difficult, rebellious child in her but not the poet and future great musician. In the long line of governesses who changed so frequently one turned up at last who was an accomplished musician. Ethel Smyth was twelve years old when for the first time she heard good music well played by this governess. From that time on the child knew that she was

to become a musician. The musical governess had studied at the Leipzig Conservatory, at that time one of the most famous music schools in Europe. Ethel decided that she, too, would study there. She announced her intention to her parents, but they merely smiled at the notion. At other times, when she annoyed them by the reiteration of her intention to study music at the Leipzig Conservatory, they would rudely refuse to listen to "such nonsense."

But Ethel knew what she wanted and after seven years of bitter struggle she was a pupil at the Leipzig Conservatory. Her dream had come true, thanks solely to her indomitable will.

Many great musicians had to fight against their parents' objections, against poverty, and other obstacles to achieve their hearts' desire, but Ethel Smyth had to overcome more odds because she was a girl. People had the stupid notion that Nature never endowed women with creative talent and genius.

Her years at the Leipzig Conservatory permitted Ethel Smyth to develop into one of the great composers of our time. It was her good fortune to associate with the stars in the heaven

of music. The friendship and encouragement of Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Clara Schumann, Arthur Sullivan, Grieg, Mahler, and many other musical celebrities helped her to gain the recognition her genius deserved.

Several operas, cantatas, Masses, vocal as well as orchestral compositions, have built the basis of her fame. She is also a remarkable conductor of orchestras.

Ethel Smyth's exquisite sense of humour, her intense vitality undiminished by the years, her fiery temperament, make her one of the most interesting women of our day.

As a child, Ethel once was asked: "What is your greatest desire?" It was a period in which Ethel had a fit of social ambitions. So in answer to this question she wrote into her friend's Confession Book:

"My greatest desire is to be made a Peeress in my own right because of Music."

Some years ago the King of England conferred a title on her "because of her music." She is now "Dame Ethel Smyth." Though the King has not made her actually a peeress of the British Empire, she has become a peeress in her own right in a far huger realm. She is a peeress in the

world of music by reason of her great talent and her unconquerable will to succeed.

There were many musical geniuses among women before Ethel Smyth. They were victims of the popular superstition that women cannot be great composers. Their creations were either lost to the world or had to go down in the history of music under the name of some male relative. Fanny Mendelssohn, for instance, composed many of the "Songs Without Words" which are ascribed to her great brother Felix.

When Ethel Smyth asserted herself and became acclaimed as one of the great musicians of her generation she also made it easier for other women of musical genius to devote themselves openly to their art and thus enrich the musical treasury of the world.

CHAPTER XXIII

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Fooling a Demigod

The richest imagination could not picture a life of more perfect happiness than was the exceptional lot of Felix Mendelssohn. His was really an enchanted life.

The family became famous through his paternal grandfather, Moses Mendelssohn, a philosopher and man of great learning, who commanded the respect of his contemporaries. He was immortalized in the most famous play of the great German poet, Lessing.

His son Abraham followed a commercial career. Abraham Mendelssohn's wealth provided the family with every comfort and refined luxury.

Though both Moses and Abraham Mendelssohn were interested in music and enjoyed hearing it, neither of them was endowed with musical talent.

Abraham Mendelssohn, the rich banker, was fortunate in his choice of a wife. Leah Solomon, of the famous Bartholdy family, was an exceptionally gifted and highly educated woman.

Nature had endowed her with great talent for music and drawing, both of which she had studied seriously. She was a great linguist, who knew several languages and read the Latin classics in the original.

It was from their mother that Felix and his sister Fanny, four years older, inherited their musical genius.

The Mendelssohn home in Hamburg, where Felix was born, and in Berlin, where they moved a few years later, was a centre of art and literature. A rare atmosphere of perfect beauty and harmony made it the shelter of the two musical prodigies, Fanny and Felix, in which their genius blossomed out like exquisite flowers in a sun-flooded conservatory.

There was, however, nothing artificial in the atmosphere around them. Deep-rooted love for beauty and not a snobbish desire to show off modelled the luxurious home.

Physical as well as intellectual beauty distinguished the members of the lovely and loving family. A gentle appreciation for everything noble and humane made them attractive and endeared them to everyone who knew them.

The parents carefully nursed their children's

exceptional gift. Fanny and Felix, the two eldest of their four children, excelled not only in music but were also very clever in drawing. Their linguistic ability, a happy facility of writing, and many other traits combined to put them high above the average.

Yet they were perfect children in their joyful plays and merry pranks, in their skill and enjoyment of indoor and outdoor sports.

But, of course, music was their supreme gift and also the centre of their interest from earliest infancy. Generosity and appreciation were traits which Fanny and Felix inherited from both parents, who were famous for their readiness to help where assistance was needed. Abraham Mendelssohn and his wife were highly respected patrons of art, science, and literature.

The Mendelssohn home was particularly famous for the fortnightly musical parties. The greatest artists of the time were proud to perform there. Mr. Mendelssohn patronized an exquisite orchestra which played regularly at the musical parties in his home. Mrs. Mendelssohn began to teach the children the piano when Felix was three and Fanny seven years old. She first gave them lessons of five minutes' duration, slowly leading

up to longer lessons as they gradually were more and more able to fix their attention on the musical task before them.

The two children playing duets on the piano were soon compared to Mozart and his sister Nannerl. The two Mendelssohn children were as devoted to each other as those divine Mozart babies. Fanny, herself a musical genius as pianist and also as a composer, adored her younger brother. And Felix was not less proud of his sister than she of him.

Their affection for each other did not express itself in blind admiration but in a devoted zeal to help one another by advice and constructive criticism.

Many of the pieces incorporated in Felix Mendelssohn's "Songs Without Words" were really Fanny's compositions. It is interesting to know that Fanny Mendelssohn was a victim of the age-old notion that women's achievements must be hidden.

Enlightened and fine as Abraham Mendelssohn was in other ways, he was old-fashioned enough not to see the injustice he inflicted on his daughter by suppressing her musical creations. And gentle Fanny was too modest to insist on

her right to be known as a composer of beautiful music, as fine as that of her great brother.

Besides many of the "Songs Without Words," several others of her compositions were also published under her brother's name. To Felix Mendelssohn's honour, however, we are glad to know that all his life he took great pains to give her public credit for her compositions and always urged Fanny to create music.

At the height of his glory he once played for Queen Victoria and her husband. In return the royal couple played and sang for him. When the young queen finished a song entitled "Schöner und schöner schmückt sich" she told Mendelssohn that this was her favourite among his songs. In a letter to his mother describing the private singing party with the royal family in London, Felix told about this: "Then I was obliged to confess to the Queen that it was Fanny who had written her favourite song. I found it very hard to tell this, but pride must have a fall."

Mrs. Mendelssohn taught the two children until Felix was eight years old. From that time on two of the greatest music teachers of Germany were engaged to continue their musical education.

The most excellent private teachers led the

general education of the four Mendelssohn children. They read Latin, English, and French classics in the original, and Shakespeare was next to Goethe the literary idol of the family.

Felix began to compose when he was a baby, and from his twelfth year on he wrote music of enduring value. The work of the little genius was serious, but he himself remained a happy and playful child. One of his biographers mentioned, for instance, that "after working hard at his first Piano Quartet in C Minor, Op. 1, he cleared high hedges with a leap and climbed up the trees like a squirrel."

His and little Fanny's compositions were played by the orchestra at the family musicales to audiences which always included great and famous musicians. At such occasions Felix often conducted his own compositions, but he was so little that he had to stand on a chair to be seen by the orchestra he led.

Felix was nine years old when he first played in a public concert, and from this time on he became one of the favourite piano virtuosos of Europe, and that means a great deal as it was the age of Chopin, Liszt, and Moscheles, the greatest piano virtuosos of their time. Mendelssohn was

also invited to play in New York, but fate prevented his visit to the New World.

The greatest event in the child's life was a visit to the German poet Goethe, whom the whole world adored as a demigod. One of Felix's music teachers, Mr. Zelter, was a great friend of the grand old man and wanted to introduce to him the little musical wonder whose proud teacher he was.

There was tremendous excitement in the Mendelssohn family at the prospect of Felix's visit to Goethe. Though he was a gentlemanly little fellow, with the best of polite manners, every member of the family showered him with advice and admonition.

"Keep your wits about you," the father warned him. "Keep a strict watch over yourself. Sit properly and behave nicely, especially at dinner. Speak distinctly and suitably. Try as much as possible to express yourself to the point. Be good and modest."

His mother asked him to "catch every word that Goethe says," and sister Fanny, who sent some of her compositions of Goethe's poems to Madam Goethe, had this to say: "When you are with Goethe, I advise you to open your eyes and

ears wide. And if on your return you can't repeat every word that fell from his lips, I will have nothing more to do with you."

So much advice might have spoiled the pleasure of the visit for an ordinary boy, but Felix was such a modest child that he took it all in the best of spirit. Yet he had at that time already composed three operas, six symphonies, quartets for piano and strings, sonatas, songs, fugues, and a great number of other pieces, many of which had already been publicly performed.

The visit of sixteen days in Goethe's home was such an extraordinary event that it will forever hold an important place, both in the history of music and in the history of literature.

To the eleven-year-old boy it was left to lead Goethe to real knowledge and full appreciation of music. The greatest German poet, whose poetry had inspired every composer of every nation to write music to his poems, knew very little and cared not very much for music. Goethe's only marked liking for any music was for Bach's fugues.

The wonder of the charming child virtuoso and composer opened the grand old man's mind for music in a miraculous way. The fortnight of

Felix's first visit was a perfect curriculum in music, for which Goethe never ceased to express his gratitude.

A letter Goethe wrote after Felix's departure to Mr. Zelter, who had brought the boy to the prince of poets, is the greatest literary tribute to the child genius.

"Just now, at half-past nine," wrote Goethe, "with the clearest sky and the brightest sunshine, the excellent Felix, having spent a fortnight with us very pleasantly, and enchanted everybody by the perfection and charm of his art, is driving off with Ottilie, Ulrike, and the children to Jena, there also to delight his friends, and leaves behind him a memory which deserves to be forever cherished.

"His coming did me a great deal of good, for my feelings about music are changed; I hear it with pleasure, interest, and affection. I love its history, for who can understand any subject without thoroughly initiating himself into its origin and progress? It is a great thing that Felix fully recognizes the value of going through its successive stages, and happily his memory is so good as to furnish him with any number of examples of all kinds. From the Bach period down-

ward he has brought Haydn, Mozart, and Gluck to life for me, has given me clear ideas of the great modern masters of technique, and, lastly, has made me understand his own productions and given me plenty to think about in himself. He took away with him my warmest blessing."

And a few days later, Goethe's daughter Ottilie wrote to the boy: "We feel like people who don't know how to fill up a blank; or like schoolboys, who find everything excessively dull after the holidays. In these descriptions I include my papa. My father sends you word that your stay here, besides giving him great pleasure, was of lasting use to him as you have made him understand so many things."

During these immortal music lessons which the dark, curly-headed child gave to the silver-haired stately demigod, Goethe once asked his "music-master" to play some Bach fugue. "You know, my dear Felix, this was always my favourite," Goethe said, and settled luxuriously to listen.

Felix started the fugue, playing as usual without music, from memory. In the midst of the fugue, however, he stopped, having forgotten the rest of it. Without a moment's hesitation, he

continued by playing an improvisation of his own. It was so much in character with the Bach fugue that Goethe did not realize what happened to the fugue which was one of the few compositions for which he had cared before he met Felix.

When in later years Mendelssohn was asked which of his musical triumphs he cherished most, he laughingly recalled this incident and added:

"What could have been a greater triumph than my success, when as a slip of a boy I impudently fooled my idol, the demigod Goethe, with my improvisation?"

Nine years later, at one of several visits that followed the first one, Felix gave Goethe another veritable course in music. It is recorded that Felix played to him every day for an hour pieces of all the great composers in chronological order, and then explained what each composer had done to further the art of music.

During these lessons Mendelssohn again did something that holds an immortal place in the history of music and of literature. He compelled Goethe to do justice to the genius of Beethoven, a thing the great German poet formerly had refused to do.

Mendelssohn's whole—all too short—life was

one unbroken line of happiness and success. Jealousy, envy, and intrigues, often so devastating to great artists, hardly reached up to him.

Occasionally, colleagues tried to belittle his genius, asserting that he owed his success to the wealth and social prestige of his family. But such envy did not influence the multitude of admirers of Mendelssohn's art.

As a virtuoso on the piano, an excellent violinist, as a conductor of rarest qualities, he enriched the musical life of his time. As composer, he belongs to those creative geniuses whose music generations to come will enjoy.

Time may destroy some of Mendelssohn's music, but will certainly preserve most of it, because it is of eternal beauty, like the poetry of Shakespeare and Goethe. And surpassing everything else he created will stand out his music to Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream.* Its gem, the overture, Felix Mendelssohn composed when he was a boy of seventeen.

But even had he not created music of lasting value, Mendelssohn's name would be immortal in the history of music because he rediscovered the Father of Music, Johann Sebastian Bach.

Mendelssohn's great teacher, Zelter, was one

of the few musicians of that time who realized how sublime the music of Johann Sebastian Bach was. Zelter possessed a stately collection of handwritten copies of Bach compositions, and based his teaching fundamentally on Bach's unsurpassed "Wohltempariertes Klavier," which was also Mrs. Mendelssohn's "bible of music."

While in the great public concert halls Bach was hardly ever played, the programmes of the fortnightly musicales in the Mendelssohn home always contained Bach music. Under this influence, Felix's interest in Bach grew to passionate admiration. He made it his life's task to reintroduce and endear Bach to the musical world.

We owe it entirely to Felix Mendelssohn that the genius of Bach was duly recognized and that his music became a household treasure of the whole world.

Mendelssohn's short but supremely happy life is a lovely page of delicate beauty in the history of mankind.

CHAPTER XXIV

LEO SLEZAK

An Army of Lohengrins

The tenor of gigantic build who has delighted audiences from the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House and many opera houses in Europe and America had a varied career before he started to sing. If he had not become one of the greatest tenors of our age, he certainly would have been a world success in one other profession which is not listed among the attempts at a career which preceded his start as a singer.

Leo Slezak would rank high among the humourists had he chosen to devote himself to literature. His occasional articles in the Vienna *Neue Freie Presse* and his autobiography are gems of humorous writing.

Brought up in a little Austrian town, amid a family of always too small means, Leo Slezak went through school as "the worst boy in town." He was always bubbling over with fun, and his passion for practical jokes and mischief-making did not endear him to his teachers.

He admits modestly that he achieved his

greatest scholarly success in the kindergarten. In the higher grades the teachers were less clever in recognizing his eminence. And they would have had to be something of educational geniuses to recognize scholarly achievements in a boy who preferred smearing the benches of the class with garlic and throwing cherry pits and plum stones all over the floor to pedantic perusal of his arithmetic book.

Things went pretty badly through the first grades, and horrible reports were sent to Leo's desperate parents. When he began to read stories he developed a new trait unfavourable to his scholastic progress. He devoured all the Indian stories he could get hold of, and was so impressed with the noble sentiments of those stories that he desired to be as noble as their heroes.

It became a passion with him to stand punishment for the pranks of other boys of his class whenever a practical joke was not performed by Leo himself. These cases were rare, as he left his classmates very little chance to perform in the line which he fairly monopolized. Every time he got a spanking for the deed of someone else he had the noble feeling of being a hero.

Being constantly in feud with his teachers for

his own misdeeds, this new passion taxed the patience of his teachers beyond endurance. In the column for special remarks his school reports invariably stated vehemently, "Mischief-maker." By the time he was in the eighth grade the school authorities arrived at the end of their patience. In the middle of the school year he was expelled.

That was no fun for the parents. They were too poor to send him to a private school and nothing was left but to make him an apprentice in some trade. None of them had a shadow of a thought for a musical career.

"I want to become a gardener," Leo declared; and it was the first sad moment in his life when he had to leave his loving parents to become gardener-apprentice on the estate of an archduchess.

The royal lady sold the estate a few months later, but Leo was not sorry. His enthusiasm for gardenership had cooled down considerably. Instead of walking among flowers, listening to the birds, as he had expected, the gardener set him to gather and carry currants to the market, to drive the manure wagon to town, and to row the vegetable boat to market.

After that Father Slezak decided what trade

Leo was to learn. He took him home and apprenticed him at a firm of blacksmiths for machinery, and sent him also to the trade school. Three hard years followed, with more work than food for the growing boy. To make ends meet, the mother spent every minute free from household duties embroidering for money, and Leo, too, added night work to earn something.

During these years the boy developed the desire to become an actor. At home, in the workshop, in school, and on the street he would make terrible grimaces that frightened people. He thought this a preparation for an actor's career.

He felt in the seventh heaven when one day a friend of his procured for him the chance to act in the mob of a local theatre. In every town in Austria—as most of the other countries in Europe—there is a municipal or state theatre where stock companies perform. Leo Slezak's theatrical career began thus on the stage of the Brünn municipal theatre as a super.

His father disliked Leo's new evening occupation, particularly when it became evident that it reacted very unfavourably on his trade work. But no admonition to leave the stage was of avail.

Leo acted so fervently among the supers that

he became quite conspicuous, and though he was not expected to sing, he got into the habit of joining in the singing of the chorus.

One evening he did this when Adolf Robinson, the world-famous Austrian barytone, sang the title rôle of *Pagliacci*. Leo Slezak sang in the mob scenes at the top of his voice, and the surprised hero whispered to him an invitation to come next day to see him.

This moment was the turning point in Slezak's career. Mr. Robinson found a grand-opera tenor in the boy who had never dreamed of a musical career. The famous singer persuaded Mr. Slezak to permit his son to study music, and offered to teach him without compensation.

It was impossible to combine the heavy work at the forge with his musical studies. His parents could not afford the expense, and no Mæcenas could be found for him. Tragedy seemed impending in the life of the happy-go-lucky youngster. But Leo was too good-humoured to despair, and there was no earthly power that could have kept him from reaching his goal.

No other possibility being in sight, he decided to join the army as a means of living during his studies. He was hardly more than sixteen when

he volunteered. As soon as his hours of military drill were over Slezak devoted himself to his singing lessons, and soon he was nicknamed "The opera singer." The barracks resounded with his powerful singing, and often also with the scolding he got for faults in his military drill. It was a happy time for the lad because his mind was filled with the expectation of a glorious career on the opera stage.

After a while the youngster was made a non-commissioned officer. It was now his business to drill recruits. Mr. Slezak asserts that to this day he has nightmarish dreams of the time when he was responsible to his severe superiors for the training of the recruits.

During one of the dreaded inspections of his men by a particularly fierce lieutenant, everything went wrong.

"These are not soldiers," burst out the officer, the veins in his neck swelling with wrath, "these are not soldiers, these are Lohengrins. Nothing but Lohengrins. This is a collection of armed opera singers, not soldiers."

The terrified Slezak was ordered to report to his captain, who lectured him as to the danger

for the Fatherland if a host of Lohengrins were to meet the military army of an enemy.

Soon afterward Slezak left the military refuge and faced new vicissitudes. He tried to make a living as an attorney's clerk, but nobody could read his briefs. Then he became a salesman. He peddled *Powidl*, a delicious plum jam, with very little success. This career ended when he ate up all his samples.

At last the period of his difficulties was over. Mr. Robinson, his singing teacher, secured a hearing for him, and the director of the Brünn municipal theatre immediately engaged Slezak, even advanced him some money on his contract. This was the beginning of one of the most happy careers a singer has ever had. His magnificent voice and his histrionic abilities put him into the front line among opera singers. His sunny disposition, robust humour, his happy family life, make him one of the most enviable of men. He is gratefully aware that life is extraordinarily kind to him and tries to express his gratitude by returning to the world the best of his art and his human kindliness.

CHAPTER XXV

DR. JENÖ VON HUBAY

A Lost Contest

The house of the Hubays was one of the musical centres of Budapest when Jenö von Hubay was a little boy. His father was conductor of the National Theatre Orchestra, where operas were given, and the Hungarian opera singers were daily guests of the house. Little Jenö heard from earliest childhood much and very good music. Dr. Hubay remembers to this day how pleasant it was to sit in a neighbouring room and hear one aria after another sung by beautiful voices. The baby liked to seat himself at the piano and roam with his little fingers over the keys. Dr. Hubay told me recently that he particularly liked "the black keys." Striking them one after the other in their order, the tones of the black keys gave him a strange pleasure.

At the age of six he got his first violin and music lessons. He had only violin lessons but learned at the same time to play the piano without a teacher. He simply transferred to the piano what he learned on the violin.

His progress on the violin was remarkable. At the age of nine the prodigy earned his first laurels playing a Viotti concerto with the orchestra of the National Conservatory of Budapest at a concert at which his father conducted.

Jenö Hubay's first public performance was a tremendous success, and the child was immediately invited to play at concerts in foreign countries. But in spite of flattering successes the father did not intend to educate his son for a musical career.

Young Jenö loved music and poetry, but had also other artistic gifts, and was not yet set on a musical career. He liked to draw, and was very clever in this art, so that Mr. Hubay suggested he should become an architect. The father was confirmed in this selection of a career for Jenö when the boy turned out an honour student in the preparatory school. It seemed settled that he was to become an architect.

Jenö was not so convinced of that. His interest centred more and more on music. His school reports lost much of their brilliancy, and by and by he ranked among the poorest students of his class. At this period he spent much time puzzling over musical problems, and also began to deci-

pher orchestra scores. Ignorant in the technique of music, he naturally did not make much out of the scores.

At the age of eleven he read one day in a newspaper that a prize of five ducats was offered for a male chorus. His father was named among the jurors of the contest.

Jenö decided to participate. He selected a patriotic poem, and wrote the music with great zeal. A time of anxious waiting followed. One day he saw a man bring a parcel of music to his father. There were the compositions of the contest to be looked over by Mr. Hubay.

The boy's heart beat so that he thought his father must hear it. He crouched in a corner and listened while his father ran through the compositions on the piano. At last he heard his own piece.

His father started to play it and went through the whole thing, frowning all the while, and murmuring to himself: "I'd like to know who wrote that. He's an ass and doesn't know anything, but he has talent."

The poor child rushed out of the room and nearly sobbed his heart out at the damning remarks. When he regained his composure he

turned his father's murmured remarks over in his mind. No gold pieces for him out of this contest! But there was some consolation in the remark that he had talent, though it was humiliating to know that he was an ass and knew nothing.

The disappointment hurt the child very much, but it spurred him also to greater efforts in his musical studies. Shortly afterward he approached his father with the request to permit him to become a musician. He promised to study hard in school as well as in the music lessons. The father realized that the happiness of his son depended upon his liberty to choose a profession for which he felt inclination. He did not resent Jenö's choice and provided the best instruction for him. Jenö Hubay was fourteen years old when he was sent to Germany. The great Hungarian violinist Josef Joachim was his teacher at the Musik Hochschule in Berlin. Under the guidance of his great compatriot, Jenö Hubay developed the talent which made him one of the foremost violin virtuosos of our time.

Dr. Jenö von Hubay looks back at a great and brilliant career. His fame rests not only on his recitals on the concert stage, which delighted the music lovers of many countries. He also

ranks high as a composer whose characteristically Hungarian creations are played and loved all over the world.

In addition to being a great violinist and composer, Hubay is also one of the foremost violin teachers of our time. There hardly appears a great violinist on any concert stage who has not studied a shorter or longer period with Hubay at the Academy of Music in Budapest.

Dr. Hubay often wonders whether he does not owe the success of his career to his failure in the contest for a male chorus. His determination to devote his life to music was really born when his father frowned at his composition and said: ". . . he's an ass, he does not know anything, but he has talent."

CHAPTER XXVI

WILHELM KIENZL

Too Many "Addios"

There was something strange in the Kienzl family. When Mamma Kienzl put little Willie to bed and started a lullaby the baby began to yell and did not stop until the mother stopped singing. Was it, however, the father who sang the lullaby little Willie stretched out quietly and listened with obvious pleasure until his lids drooped and slumber closed on him.

It was a source of great annoyance to his good and very intelligent mother, but it could not be helped: the baby would resent her lullabies and respond to those of his father. When Wilhelm grew up he realized and could explain why he had behaved so strangely as a baby.

Mrs. Kienzl sang invariably out of pitch, while her husband had a pleasant voice and sang the little melodies correctly. But though in executing music the mother was not naturally gifted or trained, she was a reliable judge of good music and a capable educator who knew how to guide her son in the development of his musical talent.

She provided him with every possible opportunity to hear good music, but she did not permit him to display his own talent publicly during childhood because she was afraid he would become vain or conceited.

Wilhelm Kienzl showed creative imaginative talent at an early age. He wrote poems and dramas when hardly six years old. And before he learned to write music he noted down melodies in a self-invented style of writing.

He was too engrossed in music to be a brilliant pupil in school. His teachers often found him oblivious of the lesson going on, embarrassedly hiding some music he was composing while the teacher was at his dry rules of arithmetic.

His scholarly shortcomings were not surprising under such circumstances. But it certainly was most astounding that after a year's tuition the director of the Music Institute advised Mrs. Kienzl to stop Wilhelm's piano lessons altogether. "Wilhelm has no musical talent whatsoever," he assured Mrs. Kienzl.

Wilhelm Kienzl often pointed to the utter failure of his first piano teacher to interest him in his lessons. The teacher had large classes with crowds of pupils at one another's heels. This did

not permit him to study the individuality of his pupils and he therefore did not find out their real character.

Once when Kienzl, already a world celebrity, returned to his native town, his old piano teacher invited him to tea. The honest old man told Mr. Kienzl that he had invited him solely to relieve his own mind about the colossal mistake he had made in judging Wilhelm unmusical.

"We have taught hundreds of pupils in our Institute," the old director of the Musical Institute told Mr. Kienzl, "but among all those hundreds we had only two talents who have accomplished something in music: you and Heinrich von Herzogenberg." Pausing and with a deep sigh, the old teacher added: "And I excluded both of you from my Institute, considering you both lacking in talent for music. It has weighed terribly on my mind ever since both of you have made such a splendid success in music."

Wilhelm Kienzl, by the way, succeeded not only in music but picked up also in his general studies. He graduated with honours. The theme of the work through which he gained his Ph.D. was, of course, something about music.

Kienzl's happy childhood in a comfortable,

cultured, middle-class home was very much like the boyhood of others of his age and set. Dr. Kienzl's favourite childhood recollection is a visit to Vienna when he was six years old. Mrs. Kienzl took the child to visit her parents in the capital of Austria. Adelina Patti in the glory of her twenty years was to sing the title rôle of Bellini's *La Sonnambule* in the Vienna Court Theatre.

The audience was raptly listening to the brilliant young singer. The duet of Amiens and Elvin drew to its close. The lovers bade each other goodbye. "*Addio, addio,*" sang Amiens. "*Addio, addio,*" responded Elvin. "*Addio, addio,*" they sang in duo, only to start some more *addios*, singly and then together. At this seemingly endless repetition of *addios*, a child's voice shrilled up to the stage in broad Austro-German country dialect: "Stop it! stop it! You have said it already so often! It's enough."

The whole audience broke into laughter, looking toward the box from where the future musician had made his sensible protest. Kienzl's own compositions do not irritate anyone by idiotic superfluities like Bellini's *addios*, which as a child he had so naïvely censured from a box in the solemn Court Theatre in Vienna.

CHAPTER XXVII

ANTON DVORÁK

An Unconvincing Serenade

Like his great fellow musicians, Verdi and Johann Strauss, Senior, Anton Dvorák was born in a little inn. His father, Frantisek Dvorák, was a genial young peasant. Besides the inn, he owned also the butcher shop of the little Bohemian village, Nelahozeves. Frantisek Dvorák loved to sing Bohemian folk songs, and accompanied his singing on the zither. He also played for dances in his inn. He was much admired by the good peasants who frequented the inn, but had certainly no more ardent admirer than Anton, the first of his eight children.

The baby crowed with delight when his father played lively polkas and *furiants* for him. And unbounded was little Anton's delight when wandering music bands stopped at the door of the inn to play for the villagers. The little boy would listen spellbound to the wandering harpist and his accompanying fiddler and drummer.

And the grandest thing in the life of the music-loving child was the yearly village fair when gay

beribboned peasant urchins and young girls merrily danced to the music bands assembled at such occasions. Bohemia's greatest opera composer, Smetana, has introduced to the world such a village fair with its merrymaking in his charming comic opera, *The Bartered Bride.*

Little Anton was a normal, happy, and healthy child, gay and lively in his outdoor play with the other peasant children of the village. He could kick up the dust in the streets of the village in barefoot races as well as any of them and held his own in every game.

When six years old he was sent to school. Anton learned from his teacher not only the magic of reading and writing, and the important fact that two and two make four. but also to sing and play the violin.

He soon proudly joined his father's singing and accompanied him on the violin when Frantisek Dvorák picked dance tunes on his zither. The little boy was soon admitted to the church choir and even allowed to sing solos in church. And the village orchestra accepted him as a violin player. There was nothing particularly artistic yet in his musical activities.

At the age of twelve his father sent Anton to

a larger place to give him the opportunity of a better school. Living in an uncle's house, the boy now ventured into new musical fields. The church organist taught him to play the organ and the piano and gave him also some faint idea of the elements of musical theory.

As a music teacher, the village organist did not amount to much. But it is to the good man's credit that he was the first to recognize unusual musical talent in the boy.

After two years in his uncle's house Anton was transferred again to a larger place, which, however, was not more than a small town. Here Anton learned German and continued to take lessons in playing the organ. It was at that time that the desire to become a musician was born in him.

It was a great blow to his ambition when his father decidedly opposed this plan and demanded that his first-born should join him in the butcher business. Frantisek Dvorák had moved from Nelahozeves to Zlonic, where he opened a butcher shop. He ordered Anton home to assist him in the butcher business.

Anton was desperate. The idea of becoming a butcher filled him with horror, but all his entreaties were in vain. At that time Bohemia did

not offer many opportunities to musical artists. There was nothing to induce Anton's father to consider his son's desire more than a "crazy notion." The little boy did not show any commanding mark of genius and one can hardly blame the simple peasant for his failure to foresee his son's brilliant musical career.

With a heavy heart Anton prepared to follow his father's order and to resign himself to a butcher's career.

Returning home, he resolved on a last desperate attempt to win his father's consent to become a musician. Puzzling how he could impress him, Anton had an idea which filled him with great hope.

"I don't play any instrument so wonderfully that my father could see I may become a great musician and earn a decent living," he said to a friend in whom he confided his troubles.

"If I could prove to him that I might become a composer like Smetana," he continued, "Father might permit me to study music."

Anton, determined not to leave one stone unturned in the pursuance of his young life's desire, immediately settled to compose a polka. The melody finished, he wrote out the parts for a band

he had won over to his secret plan, and arranged to serenade his father. He hoped the surprise performance would delight his father and convince him that Anton was fit to become a musician.

But there was more anxious enthusiasm than knowledge of music in the polka. When the ambitious composer let his orchestra loose for the surprise serenade the surprise was more his than his father's.

The members of the orchestra all played with greatest good will, but the parts were written out without knowledge of the musical character of the different instruments. The result was extraordinary. The young composer nearly died with shame at the hideous discord coming forth from the orchestra.

The surprise serenade did not convince his father that he should permit his son to become a musician, but it convinced Anton that he must consider himself defeated. After that failure he gave up, fortunately not forever.

Anton was very unhappy in the uncongenial profession and never stopped dreaming of a musical career. And as genius will have its way he at last succeeded in winning his father's permission to leave the hated trade and to try himself at

music. He had been a butcher for nearly a year when at the age of sixteen Anton Dvorák entered the Organ School in Prague.

Under every conceivable difficulty he managed to work himself through three years of study in that school. Few great musicians have starved more in their youth than Dvorák, who was too poor even to buy music note paper. He earned trifles playing the violin in inns and beer gardens, where he collected pennies in his cap. On Sundays he played the viola in the small orchestra of a private chapel.

After three years of greatest hardship Anton Dvorák obtained a place as viola player in one of the theatres of Prague. His salary did not permit him great luxuries. It did not even cover all the necessities of life; but it was enough to permit the young genius to concentrate on the broader study of music.

He left the Organ School and devoted every minute free from his duties in the theatre orchestra to the intense study of the great musical master works of the past and of his generation. It can safely be said that Dvorák was chiefly his own teacher in mastering the technical knowledge of music.

Long years of very hard work and very little reward and recognition followed. But at last his compositions began to gain attention. When the great German composer Johannes Brahms became aware of Dvorák's existence he immediately proceeded, with the generosity of every great artist, to help his young colleague. Brahms induced the Austrian government to grant Dvorák a yearly stipend. This enabled the young Bohemian composer to devote himself entirely to creating music.

And when Brahms soon afterward succeeded in inducing one of the greatest German musical publishing houses to accept Dvorák's compositions his period of hardships and struggles was at an end. As soon as the musical world learned to know Dvorák's compositions he was enthusiastically acclaimed as one of the great musicians of his time.

Free of care and happy in the recognition of his genius, Dvorák composed notable works, which are played wherever people love and appreciate music. He was showered with honours by courts and musical institutions of many countries. He was also invited to one of the most important musical posts America then had to offer.

Dvorák was for several years Director of the New York Conservatory of Music.

During these years he created some of his most magnificent compositions. He was deeply impressed by the Negro music he learned to know in America. One of his first steps as director of the Conservatory was to admit Negroes as students. Dvorák also gave Negro soloists and choirs a prominent part in the programmes of the concerts he conducted.

Dvorák's "New World Symphony," his "The American Flag," composed for the World's Fair in Chicago, and many other compositions were a tribute to the hospitable country and its Negro music.

In spite of the miserable failure of his first composition, the polka so disastrously played at the surprise serenade, Anton Dvorák, the little peasant boy, became a brilliant star in the heaven of music.

CHAPTER XXVIII

GEORGE GERSHWIN

Soaked in Rain and Admiration

That amazing city, New York, condemned as un-American by people of strange notions, has given America its first great composer in Edward MacDowell. If the Manhattan part of New York claims him as her son, the Brooklyn part presented the world with the youngest in the line of distinguished American composers who since MacDowell have proven to the world that America produces musical as well as technical genius.

Soon after his birth, George Gershwin's parents moved from Brooklyn to Manhattan. They owned a restaurant on the lower East Side of New York. It was in this part of the city that George went to school and associated with the children for games on the famous sidewalks of New York.

His boyhood was uneventful, exactly like that of boys not distinguished by any particular talent. His parents provided a comfortable living, but nothing else. There was no musical instrument in

the house and nobody sang, nor was any other art cultivated in the family. A gramophone occasionally served canned dance music.

When Mr. Gershwin burst into fame the family tree was scanned for musical ancestry. Not the slightest trace of any musical or other artistic talent could be found on either side of the family. Yet Mr. Gershwin's older brother and his sister are also artists. The brother, Ira, is writing the lyrics for George's compositions, and Miss Gershwin is a professional dancer.

George was not very much interested in his school. He felt a vague longing for something different than his environment offered, but he did not "catch" what it was.

Though a healthy, wild boy he was not adventurous and did not break away from his narrow circle. As a boy he never heard good music, was never at a concert or a good musical show, and opera was Chinese to him.

It was a notion his mother brought from Europe that one should have a piano if one could afford it that first brought music into George Gershwin's life when he was thirteen years old. The older boy, Ira, was to have piano lessons, but George got hold of the instrument and crowded

the brother out. The parents could not afford music lessons for both of the boys. George, however, was so eager to learn that the good-natured parents let him have his wish. Ira didn't care, so everything was for the best.

George mastered in no time what the teacher had to offer, and soon another piano teacher was engaged. This instructor, too, was anything but efficient.

Mr. Gershwin likes to remember how he at last got into the hands of a teacher who really knew what good music was. When this fine musician examined George the boy played the star piece of his repertoire to show what he knew.

"Who taught you that stuff?" the examining musician exploded. When George named the teacher, Mr. Hambitzer said: "Let's go and kill him right now!"

But they had mercy on the man and instead of killing the culprit they settled to do better work. George was fourteen years old when he started to study with Mr. Hambitzer, on whose advice he also took lessons with two other teachers. He did not strike out for a musical career. He liked the music lessons, yet he hardly practised more than half an hour a week. He liked to

play on the piano fantastic improvisations, but did not attempt anything serious.

The first time music made a deeper impression on him was a memorable occasion in Mr. Gershwin's young life. Max Rosen, who was to become a world-famous violinist, was George Gershwin's classmate in the public school.

One day Max Rosen performed for the class after the lunch period. But George was so little interested in music that he didn't care to attend the recital. Accidentally, however, the sounds of the violin reached him and he became deeply impressed.

Overwhelmed with pleasure, George stopped at the entrance of the school. He waited for Max Rosen to tell him how he admired his playing. It began to rain, then to pour, but the violinist did not appear. George's soul, filled with admiration for his classmate's art, did not realize how much time had passed. He was perhaps dreaming of performing himself like Rosen.

After two and a half hours' waiting in the pouring rain, soaked to the skin, he went back into the school building. It turned out that Rosen had left immediately after the recital through the back door. But George was determined to

express his admiration to Max, so he trotted away to the Rosen home. Dripping wet, but unabashed, he arrived there and found that the object of his admiration had left home.

His wet clothes dried, but his admiration for Max Rosen never dried out, and the two young artists have been fast friends ever since that wet day.

It was perhaps greatly due to this friendship that George decided to devote himself entirely to music. He was about fifteen years old when he reached that decision and wanted to leave school immediately. His parents insisted on his continuing school and succeeded in keeping him there for a while. But in spite of all their efforts, he left school before he was seventeen and embarked on a career that has already placed him in the front ranks of the world's composers.

This may sound exaggerated, as Mr. Gershwin's name is connected with many compositions that will not stand the test of time. Nevertheless, his name will hold a place in the history of music because he succeeded in creating something new that will mark a musical epoch.

George Gershwin's genius has demonstrated that jazz, the uncouth musical expression of our

day, has elements of real art which will survive the crude beginnings of this first original American contribution to music. Some years ago Paul Whiteman suggested that Mr. Gershwin should write jazz music good enough for a serious concert platform.

"It can't be done," said severe critics of jazz. "This barbarian noise cannot be translated into music."

George Gershwin did not debate whether it could be done or not. Instead of discussing the problem he plunged with youthful recklessness into his task. Three weeks later he handed Mr. Whiteman the score of the "Rhapsody in Blue."

"I worked as hard as I had never worked before," Mr. Gershwin told me recently. "I finished the composition in three weeks, not in ten days, as several writers have stated."

The "Rhapsody in Blue" did for American jazz what Franz Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies did for Hungarian folk songs. It elevated it into the rank of serious music. Only a genius could achieve that with so little technical knowledge about music as Gershwin possessed at that time.

After the triumphant success of the "Rhapsody in Blue" Mr. Walter Damrosch com-

missioned Gershwin to compose something for the New York Symphony Orchestra. Being a virtuoso on the piano Gershwin decided to compose a piano concerto which he could perform himself with the orchestra.

"I chose to write a piano concerto," Mr. Gershwin told me, and added with a boyish smile, "though I had not the slightest idea what a piano concerto really was."

Before he started to work on that composition he bought a simple primer of musical form to find out what a piano concerto was. On so slim a technical basis he built the second jazz composition of enduring value, known under the title, "Piano Concerto in F."

The third composition which assured George Gershwin a place in the history of music before he had reached his thirtieth year is "An American in Paris," described on the original score as a Tone Poem.

Full of serious ambition to grow in his art George Gershwin is fortunately able to express himself in musical terms full of exquisite humour as well as of pathos. He will go down in history as one who has created a new musical form, as Bach stands for the creation of the fugue, Haydn

for the symphony, Gluck for the opera. The world owes Schubert the "Lied," Liszt added the Rhapsody to the older forms of music, Gershwin will list as the creator of the higher form of jazz, which makes it legitimate music.

The early recognition of Gershwin's genius puts an immense responsibility on the young American composer. His talent and his serious ambition encourage the hope that he will inspire the highest development of original American music.

THE END

TAXIS AND TOADSTOOLS

by Rachel Field

Ho, for taxis green or blue,
Hi, for taxis red,
They roll along the Avenue
Like spools of colored thread!

Jack-o'-Lantern yellow,
Orange as the moon,
Greener than the greenest grass
Ever grew in June.
Gayly striped or checked in squares,
Wheels that twinkle bright,
Don't you think that taxis make
A very pleasant sight?

Ho, for taxis red and green,
Hi, for taxis blue,
I wouldn't be a private car
In sober black, would you?

* * *

Rachel Field enjoys life; she has a good time in the city and in the country; and she has a quaint way of looking at the world. Her verses and drawings in *Taxis and Toadstools* will delight parents as well as children.

ONE OF THE MANY AMUSING DRAWINGS DONE
BY CARROLL SNELL FOR "ALICE IN ORCHESTRALIA"

Do you know that a short underground ride on the "tuba" will bring you to Fiddladelphia, the capital of Orchestralia?

At any rate, that's how Alice got there in Ernest La Prade's book, ALICE IN ORCHESTRALIA.

Mr. La Prade, formerly a violinist in the New York Symphony Orchestra, has contrived to put an amazing amount of information about music into the pages of this amusing story.

WALTER DAMROSCH, former conductor of the New York Symphony Orchestra, says of the book:

> "Alice in Orchestralia is but another Alice in Wonderland, for the author takes us in delightful fashion into the heart of that most wondrous land of all—the land of music.
>
> "Alice is to be envied, for there is hardly anything about a modern symphony orchestra—its make up, its functions, its manner of speaking that universal language of human emotions—that she does not learn through the pages of this book. And it is all done in such a beguiling way that one might swear it had been written by the whimsical and immortal author of the original Alice in Wonderland.
>
> "I am glad that this work was written by an American, and I am proud that he is also a member of my orchestra."

If you're at all interested in music, you'll find this book the most ingenious and delightful published in many a day.

Printed in the U.S.A.